



UNIVERSITY  
OF PITTSBURGH  
LIBRARY



THIS BOOK PRESENTED BY

T. R. Parker

Year 1830.

Guy E. Brown  
Franklin Harbor

W.H.

Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2009 with funding from  
University of Pittsburgh Library System

**ADVICE TO YOUNG MEN.**

AND (INCIDENTALLY) TO

**YOUNG WOMEN,**

IN THE

**MIDDLE AND HIGHER RANKS OF LIFE**

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS, ADDRESSED TO

**A YOUTH, A BACHELOR, A LOVER, A HUSBAND,  
A CITIZEN OR A SUBJECT.**

---

**BY WILLIAM COBBETT.**

---

CLAREMONT, N. H.  
MANUFACTURING COMPANY  
SIMEON IDE, AG'T.

DAR.  
BD1661  
C654  
Cof.1

## INTRODUCTION.

---

1. It is the duty, and ought to be the pleasure, of age and experience to warn and instruct youth and to come to the aid of inexperience. When sailors have discovered rocks or breakers, and have had the good luck to escape with life from amidst them, they, unless they be pirates or barbarians as well as sailors, point out the spots for the placing of buoys and of lights, in order that others may not be exposed to the danger which they have so narrowly escaped. What man of common humanity, having, by good luck, missed being engulfed in a quagmire or a quick-sand, will withhold from his neighbours a knowledge of the peril without which the dangerous spots are not to be approached ?

2. The great effect which correct opinions and sound principles, imbibed in early life, together with the good conduct, at that age, which must naturally result from such opinions and principles; the great effect which these have on the whole course of our lives is, and must be, well known to every man of common observation. How many of us, arrived at

only 40 years, have to repent ; nay, which of us has not to repent, or has not had to repent, that he did not, at an earlier age, possess a great stock of knowledge of that kind which has an immediate effect on our personal ease and happiness ; that kind of knowledge, upon which the cheerfulness and the harmony of our homes depend !

3. It is to communicate a stock of this sort of knowledge, in particular, that this work is intended ; knowledge, indeed, relative to education, to many sciences, to trade, agriculture, horticulture, law, government, and religion ; knowledge relating, incidentally, to all these ; but, the main object is to furnish that sort of knowledge to the young which but few men acquire until they be old, when it comes too late to be useful.

4. To communicate to others the knowledge that I possess has always been my taste and my delight ; and few, who know any-thing of my progress through life, will be disposed to question my fitness for the task. Talk of rocks and breakers and quag-mires and quick-sands, who has ever escaped from amidst so many as I have ! Thrown (by my own will, indeed) on the wide world at a very early age, not more than eleven or twelve years, without money to support, without friends to advise, and without book-learning to assist me ; passing a few years dependent solely on my own labour for my subsistence ; then becoming a common soldier and leading a military life, chiefly in foreign parts, for eight

years; quitting that life after really, for me, high promotion, and with, for me, a large sum of money; marrying at an early age, going at once to France to acquire the French language, thence to America; passing eight years there, becoming bookseller and author, and taking a prominent part in all the important discussions of the interesting period from 1793 to 1799, during which there was, in that country, a continued struggle carried on between the English and the French parties; conducting myself, in the ever-active part which I took in that struggle, in such a way as to call forth marks of unequivocal approbation from the government at home; returning to England in 1800, resuming my labours here, suffering, during these twenty-nine years, two years of imprisonment, heavy fines, three years self-banishment to the other side of the Atlantic, and a total breaking of fortune, so as to be left without a bed to lie on, and, during these twenty-nine years of troubles and of punishments, writing and publishing, every week of my life, whether in exile or not, eleven weeks only excepted, a periodical paper, containing more or less of matter worthy of public attention; writing and publishing, during *the same twenty-nine years*, a grammar of the French and another of the English language, a work on the Economy of the Cottage, a work on Forest Trees and Woodlands, a work on Gardening, an account of America, a book of Sermons, a work on the Corn-plant, a history of the Protestant Reformation; all books of great and

continued sale, and the *last* unquestionably the book of greatest circulation in the whole world, the Bible only excepted ; having, during *these same twenty-nine years*, of troubles and embarrassments without number, introduced into England the manufacture of Strawplat ; also several valuable trees ; having introduced, during *the same twenty-nine years*, the cultivation of the Corn-plant so manifestly valuable as a source of food ; having, during the same period, always (whether in exile or not) sustained a shop of some size, in London ; having, during the whole of the same period, never employed less, on an average, than ten persons, in some capacity or other, exclusive of printers, bookbinders, and others, connected with papers and books ; and having, during these twenty-nine years of troubles, embarrassments, prisons, fines, and banishments, bred up a family of seven children to man's and woman's state.

5. If such a man be not, after he has survived and accomplished all this, qualified to give Advice to Young Men, no man is qualified for that task. There may have been natural *genius* : but *genius alone*, not all the *genius* in the world, could, without *something more*, have conducted me through these perils. During these twenty-nine years, I have had for deadly and ever-watchful foes, a government that has the collecting and distributing of sixty millions of pounds in a year, and also, every soul who shares in that distribution. Until very lately, I have had, for the far greater part of the time, the whole of the

press as my deadly enemy. Yet, at this moment, it will not be pretended, that there is another man in the kingdom, who has so many cordial friends. For as to the *friends of ministers* and the *great*, the friendship is towards the *power*, the *influence*; it is, in fact, towards *those taxes*, of which so many thousands are gaping to get at a share. And, if we could, through so thick a veil, come at the naked fact, we should find the subscription, now going on in Dublin for the purpose of erecting a monument in that city, to commemorate the good recently done, or alleged to be done, to Ireland, by the DUKE of WELLINGTON; we should find, that the subscribers have *the taxes* in view; and that, if the monument shall actually be raised, it ought to have *selfishness* and not *gratitude*, engraven on its base. Nearly the same may be said with regard to all the praises that we hear bestowed on men in power. The friendship which is felt towards me, is pure and disinterested: it is not founded in any hope that the parties can have, that they can ever *profit* from professing it: it is founded on the gratitude which they entertain for the good that I *have done* them: and of this sort of friendship, and friendship so cordial, no man ever possessed a larger portion.

6. Now, mere *genius* will not acquire this for a man. There must be something more than *genius*: there must be industry: there must be perseverance: there must be, before the eyes of the nation, proofs of extraordinary exertion: people must say to them-

selves, “ What wise conduct must there have been “ in the employing of the time of this man ! How “ sober, how sparing in diet, how early a riser, how “ little expensive he must have been ! ” These are the things, and *not genius*, which have caused my labours to be so incessant and so successful : and, though I do not affect to believe, that *every young man*, who should read this work, will become able to perform labours of equal magnitude and importance, I do pretend, that *every young man*, who will attend to my advice, will become able to perform a great deal more than men generally do perform, whatever may be his situation in life ; and, that he will, too, perform it with greater ease and satisfaction, than he would, without the advice, be able to perform the smaller portion.

7. I have had, from thousands of young men, and men advanced in years also, letters of thanks for the great benefit which they have derived from my labours. Some have thanked me for my Grammars, some for my Cottage-Economy, others for the Woodlands and the Gardener ; and, in short, for every one of my works have I received letters of thanks from numerous persons, of whom I had never heard before. In many cases I have been told, that, if the parties had had my books to read some years before, the gain to them, whether in time or in other things, would have been very great. Many, and a great many, have told me, that, though long at school, and though their parents had paid for their being taught

English Grammar, or French, they had, in a short time, learned more from my books, on those subjects, than they had learned, in years, from their teachers. How many gentlemen have thanked me, in the strongest terms, for my *Woodlands* and *Gardener*, observing (just as Lord Bacon had observed in his time) that they had before seen no books, on these subjects, that they could *understand*. But, I know not of any thing that ever gave me more satisfaction than I derived from the visit of a gentleman of fortune, whom I had never heard of before, and who, about four years ago, came to thank me in person for a complete reformation, which had been worked in his son by the reading of my two **SERMONS** on *drinking* and on *gaming*.

8. I have, therefore, done, already, a great deal in this way: but there is still wanting, in a compact form, a body of **ADVICE** such as that which I now propose to give: and in the giving of which I shall divide my matter as follows. 1. Advice addressed to a **YOUTH**; 2. Advice addressed to a **BACHELOR**; 3. Advice addressed to a **LOVER**; 4. To a **HUSBAND**: 5. To a **FATHER**; 6. To a **CITIZEN** or **SUBJECT**.

9. Some persons will smile, and others laugh outright, at the idea of "Cobbett's giving advice for conducting the affairs of *love*." Yes, but I was once young, and surely I may say with the poet, I forgot which of them:

" Though old I am, for ladies' love unfit,  
The power of beauty I remember yet."

I forget, indeed, the *names* of the ladies as completely, pretty nigh, as I do that of the poets; but I remember their influence, and of this influence on the conduct and in the affairs and on the condition of men, I have, and must have, been a witness all my life long. And, when we consider in how great a degree the happiness of all the remainder of a man's life depends, and always must depend, on his taste and judgment in the character of a lover, this may well be considered as the most important period of the whole term of his existence.

10. In my address to the HUSBAND, I shall, of course, introduce advice relative to the important duties of *masters* and *servants*; duties of great importance, whether considered as affecting families or as affecting the community. In my address to the CITIZEN or SUBJECT, I shall consider all the reciprocal duties of the governors and the governed, and also the duties which man owes to his neighbour. It would be tedious to attempt to lay down rules for conduct exclusively applicable to every distinct calling, profession and condition of life; but, under the above-described heads, will be conveyed every species of advice of which I deem the utility to be unquestionable.

11. I have, thus, fully described the nature of my little work, and, before I enter on the first Letter, I venture to express a hope, that its good effects will be felt long after its author shall have ceased to exist.

# LETTER I.

TO A YOUTH.

---

12. You are now arrived at that age which the law thinks sufficient to make an oath, taken by you, valid in a court of law. Let us suppose from fourteen to nearly twenty ; and, reserving, for a future occasion, my remarks on your duty towards parents, let me here offer you my advice as to the means likely to contribute largely towards making you a happy man, useful to all about you, and an honour to those from whom you sprang.

13. Start, I beseech you, with a conviction firmly fixed on your mind, that you have no right to live in this world ; that, being of hale body and sound mind, you have *no right* to any earthly existence, without doing *work* of some sort or other, unless you have ample fortune whereon to live clear of debt ; and, that even in that case, you have no right to breed children, to be kept by others, or to be exposed to the chance of being so kept. Start with this conviction thoroughly implanted in your mind. To wish to live on the labour of others is, besides the folly of it, to contemplate a *fraud* at the least, and, under certain circumstances, to meditate oppression and robbery.

14. I suppose you in the middle rank of life. Happiness ought to be your great object, and it is to be found only in *independence*. Turn your back on Whitehall and on Somerset-House ; leave the Customs and Excise to the feeble and low-minded ; look not for success to favour, to partiality, to friendship, or to what is called *interest* : write it on your heart,

that you will depend solely on your own merit and your own exertions. Think not, neither, of any of those situations, where gaudy habiliments and sounding titles poorly disguise from the eyes of good sense the mortifications and the heart-ache of slaves. Answer me not by saying, that these situations "*must be filled by somebody;*" for, if I were to admit the truth of the proposition, which I do not, it would remain for you to show, that they are conducive to happiness, the contrary of which has been proved to me by the observation of a now pretty long life.

15. Indeed, reason tells us, that it must be thus: for that which a man owes to favour or to partiality, that same favour or partiality is constantly liable to take from him. He who lives upon any thing except his own labour, is incessantly surrounded by rivals: his grand resource is that servility in which he is always liable to be surpassed. He is in daily danger of being out-bidden; his very bread depends upon caprice; and he lives in a state of uncertainty and never-ceasing fear. His is not, indeed, the dog's life, "*hunger and idleness;*" but it is worse; for it is "*idleness with slavery;*" the latter being the just price of the former. Slaves frequently are well *fed* and well *clad*; but, slaves dare not *speak*; they dare not be suspected to *think* differently from their masters: hate his acts as much as they may; be he tyrant, be he drunkard, be he fool, or be he all three at once, they must be silent, or, nine times out of ten, affect approbation: though possessing a thousand times his knowledge, they must feign a conviction of his superior understanding; though knowing that it is they, who, in fact, do all that he is paid for doing, it is destruction to them to *seem as if they thought* any portion of the service belonged to them! Far from me be the thought, that any youth who shall read this page would not rather perish than submit to live in a state like this! Such a state is fit only for the refuse of nature; the halt, the half-blind, the unhappy creatures whom nature has marked out for degradation.

16. And how comes it, then, that we see hale and even clever youths voluntarily bending their necks to this slavery ; nay, pressing forward in eager rivalry to assume the yoke that ought to be insupportable ? The cause, and the only cause, is, that the deleterious fashion of the day has created so many artificial wants, and has raised the minds of young men so much above their real rank and state of life, that they look scornfully on the emplcymt, the fare, and the dress that would become them ; and, in order to avoid that state in which they might live *free* and *happy*, they become *showy slaves*.

17. The great source of independence, the French express in a precept of three words, “ *Vivre de peu*,” which I have always very much admired. “ *To live upon little*” is the great security against slavery ; and this precept extends to dress and other things besides food and drink. When Doctor Johnson wrote his dictionary, he put in the word pensioner thus: “ *PENSIONER—A slave of state*.” After this he himself became a *pensioner* ! And, thus, agreeably to his own definition, he lived and died “ *a slave of state* !” What must this man of great genius, and of great industry too, have felt at receiving this pension ! Could he be so callous as not to feel a pang upon seeing his own name placed before his own degrading definition ? And, what could induce him to submit to this ? His wants, his artificial wants, his habit of indulging in the pleasures of the table ; his disregard of the precept “ *Vivre de peu*.” This was the cause ; and, be it observed, that indulgences of this sort, while they tend to make men poor and expose them to commit mean acts, tend also to enfeeble the body, and more especially to cloud and to weaken the mind.

18. When this celebrated author wrote his dictionary, he had not been debased by luxurious enjoyments ; the rich and powerful had not caressed him into a slave ; his writings then bore the stamp of truth and independence : but, having been debased by luxury, he who had, while content with plain

fare, been the strenuous advocate of the rights of the people, became a strenuous advocate for *taxation without representation* ; and, in a work under the title of “ *Taxation no Tyranny*,” defended, and greatly assisted to produce, that unjust and bloody war which finally severed from England that great country, the United States of America, now the most powerful and dangerous rival that this kingdom ever had. The statue of Dr. Johnson was the first that was put into St. Paul’s Church ! A signal warning to us not to look upon monuments in honour of the dead as a proof of their virtues ; for here we see St. Paul’s Church holding up to the veneration of posterity a man whose own writings, together with the records of the pension list, prove him to have been “ *a slave of state.*”

19. Endless are the instances of men of bright parts and high spirit having been, by degrees, rendered powerless and despicable, by their imaginary wants. Seldom has there been a man with a fairer prospect of accomplishing great things and of acquiring lasting renown, than Charles Fox : he had great talents of the most popular sort ; the times were singularly favourable to an exertion of them with success ; a large part of the nation admired him and were his partizans ; he had, as to the great question between him and his rival (Pitt,) reason and justice clearly on his side ; but he had against him his squandering and luxurious habits : these made him dependent on the rich part of his partizans ; made his wisdom subservient to opulent folly or selfishness ; deprived his country of all the benefit that it might have derived from his talents ; and, finally, sent him to the grave without a single sigh from a people, a great part of whom would, in his earlier years, have wept at his death as at a national calamity.

20. Extravagance in *dress*, in the haunting of *play-houses*, in *horses*, in every thing else, is to be avoided, and, in youths and young men, extravagance in *dress* particularly. This sort of extravagance, this waste of money on the decoration of the

body, arises solely from vanity, and from vanity of the most contemptible sort. It arises from the notion, that all the people in the street, for instance, will be *looking at you* as soon as you walk out ; and that they will, in a greater or less degree, think the better of you on account of your fine dress. Never was notion more false. All the sensible people, that happen to see you, will think nothing at all about you : those who are filled with the same vain notion as you are, will perceive your attempt to impose on them, and will despise you accordingly : rich people will wholly disregard you, and you will be envied and hated by those who have the same vanity that you have without the means of gratifying it. Dress should be suited to your rank and station ; a surgeon or physician should not dress like a carpenter ! but, there is no reason why a tradesman, a merchant's clerk, or clerk of any kind, or why a shop-keeper, or manufacturer, or even a merchant ; no reason at all why any of these should dress in an *expensive* manner. It is a great mistake to suppose, that they derive any advantage from exterior decoration. Men are estimated by other *men* according to their capacity and willingness to be in some way or other *useful* ; and, though, with the foolish and vain part of *women*, fine clothes frequently do something, yet the greater part of the sex are much too penetrating to draw their conclusions solely from the outside show of a man : they look deeper, and find other criterions whereby to judge. And, after all, if the fine clothes obtain you a wife, will they bring you, in that wife, *frugality*, *good sense*, and that sort of attachment that is likely to be lasting ? Natural beauty of person is quite another thing : this always has, it always will and must have, some weight even with men, and great weight with women. But, this does not want to be set off by expensive clothes. Female eyes are, in such cases, very sharp ; they can discover beauty though half hidden by beard, and even by dirt, and surrounded by rags : and, take this as a secret worth

half a fortune to you, that women, however personally vain they may be themselves, *despise personal vanity in men.*

21. Let your dress be as cheap as may be without *shabbiness*; think more about the colour of your shirt than about the gloss or texture of your coat; be always as *clean* as your occupation will, without inconvenience, permit; but never, no, not for one moment, believe, that any human being, with sense in skull, will love or respect you on account of your fine or costly clothes. A great misfortune of the present day is, that every one is, in his own estimate, *raised above his real state of life*: every one seems to think himself entitled, if not to title and great estate, at least *to live without work*. This mischievous, this most destructive way of thinking, has, indeed, been produced, like almost all our other evils, by the Acts of our Septennial and Unreformed Parliament. That body, by its Acts, has caused an enormous Debt to be created, and, in consequence, a prodigious sum to be raised annually in taxes. It has caused, by these means, a race of loan-mongers and stock-jobbers to arise. These carry on a species of *gaming*, by which some make fortunes in a day, and others, in a day, become beggars. The unfortunate gamesters, like the purchasers of blanks in a Lottery, are never heard of; but the fortunate ones become companions for lords, and some of them lords themselves. We have, within these few years, seen many of these gamesters get fortunes of a quarter of a million in a few days, and then we have heard them, though notoriously amongst the lowest and basest of human creatures, called "*honourable gentlemen.*"! In such a state of things, who is to expect patient industry, laborious study, frugality, and care; who, in such a state of things, is to expect these to be employed in pursuit of that competence which it is the laudable wish of all men to secure? Not long ago a man, who had served his time to a tradesman in London, became, instead of pursuing his trade, a stock-jobber, or gambler; and, in about *two years*, drove his *coach and four*, had his

town house and country house, and visited, and was visited by, *peers of the highest rank!* A *fellow-apprentice* of this lucky gambler, though a tradesman in excellent business, seeing no earthly reason why he should not have his coach and four also, turned his stock in trade into a stake for the 'Change ; but, alas ! at the end of a few months, instead of being in a coach and four, he was in the *Gazette* !

22. This is one instance out of hundreds of thousands ; not, indeed, exactly of the same description, but all arising from the same copious source. The words *speculate* and *speculation* have been substituted for *gamble* and *gambling*. The hatefulness of the pursuit is thus taken away ; and, while taxes to the amount of more than double the whole of the rental of the kingdom ; while these cause such crowds of idlers, every one of whom calls himself a *gentleman*, and avoids the appearance of working for his bread ; while this is the case, who is to wonder, that a great part of the youth of the country, knowing themselves to be as *good*, as *learned*, and as *well bred* as these *gentlemen* : who is to wonder, that they think, that they also ought to be considered as *gentlemen* ? Then, the late *war*, (also the work of the Septennial Parliament,) has left us, amongst its many legacies, such swarms of *titled* men and women ; such swarms of "*Sirs*" and their "*Ladies* ;" men and women who, only the other day, were the *fellow-apprentices*, *fellow-tradesmen's* or *farmers' sons* and *daughters*, or, indeed, the *fellow-servants*, of those who are now in these several states of life ; the late Septennial Parliament war has left us such swarms of these, that it is no wonder that the heads of young people are turned, and that they are ashamed of that state of life to act their part well in which ought to be their delight.

23. But, though the cause of the evil is in *Acts* of the Septennial Parliament ; though this universal desire in people to be thought to be above their station ; though this arises from such acts ; and, though it is no wonder that your men are thus

turned from patient study and labour ; though these things be undoubted, they form no reason why I should not *warn you* against becoming a victim to this national scourge. For, in spite of every art made use of to avoid labour, the taxes will, after all, maintain only *so many* idlers. We cannot all be "*knights*" and "*gentlemen*;" there must be a large part of us, after all, to make and mend clothes and houses, and carry on trade and commerce, and, in spite of all that we can do, the far greater part of us must actually *work* at something ; for, unless we can get at some of the taxes, we fall under the sentence of Holy Writ, "*He who will not work shall not eat.*" Yet, so strong is the propensity to be thought "*gentlemen*;" so general is this desire amongst the youth of this formerly laborious and unassuming nation ; a nation famed for its pursuit of wealth through the channels of patience, punctuality, and integrity ; a nation famed for its love of solid acquisitions and qualities, and its hatred of every thing showy and false: so general is this really fraudulent desire amongst the youth of this now "*speculating*" nation, that thousands upon thousands of them are, at this moment, in a state of half starvation, not so much because they are too *lazy* to earn their bread, as because they are too *proud* ! And what are the *consequences* ? Such a youth remains or becomes, a burden to his parents, of whom he ought to be the comfort if not the support. Always aspiring to something higher than he can reach, his life is a life of disappointment and of shame. If marriage *befal* him, it is a real affliction, involving others as well as himself. His lot is a thousand times worse than that of the common labouring pauper. Nineteen times out of twenty a premature death awaits him : and, alas ! how numerous are the cases in which that death is most miserable, not to say ignominious ! *Stupid pride* is one of the symptoms of *madness*. Of the two madmen mentioned in *Don Quixote*, one thought himself **NEPTUNE** and the other **JUPITER**. *Shakspeare* agrees

with CERVANTES ; for, Mad Tom, in King Lear, being asked who he is, answers, " I am a *tailor* run mad with *pride*." How many have we heard of, who claimed relationship with *noblemen* and *kings* ; while of not a few each has thought himself the Son of God ! To the public journals, and to the observations of every one, nay, to the "*county-lunatic asylums*" (things never heard of in England till now,) I appeal for the fact of the vast and hideous *increase of madness in this country* ; and, within these very few years, how many scores of young men, who, if their minds had been unperverted by the gambling principles of the day, had a probably long and happy life before them ; who had talent, personal endowments, love of parents, love of friends, admiration of large circles ; who had, in short, every thing to make life desirable, and who, from mortified pride, founded on false pretensions, have *put an end to their own existence*.

24. As to DRUNKENNESS and GLUTTONY, generally so called, these are vices so nasty and beastly that I deem any one capable of indulging in them to be wholly unworthy of my advice ; and, if any youth, unhappily initiated in these odious and debasing vices, should happen to read what I am now writing, I refer him to the command of God, conveyed to the Israelites by Moses, in Deuteronomy, chapter xxi. The father and mother are to take the bad son "and bring him to the elders of the city ; and they shall say to the elders, this our son will not obey our voice : he is a *glutton* and a *drunkard*. And all the men of the city shall stone him with stones, that he die." I refer downright beastly gluttons and drunkards to this ; but indulgence short, *far short*, of this gross and really nasty drunkenness and gluttony is to be deprecated, and that, too, with the more earnestness because it is too often looked upon as being no crime at all, and as having nothing blameable in it : nay, there are many persons, who *pride* themselves on their refined taste in matters connected with eating and drinking: so far from being ashamed

ed of employing their thoughts on the subject, it is their boast that they do it. St. Gregory, one of the Christian fathers, says: "It is not the *quantity* or the *quality* of the meat, or drink, but the *love of it* that is condemned :" that is to say, the indulgence beyond the absolute demands of nature ; the hankering after it ; the neglect of some duty or other for the sake of the enjoyments of the table.

25. This *love* of what are called "good eating and drinking," if very unamiable in grown-up persons, is perfectly hateful in *a youth* ; and, if he indulge in the propensity, he is already half ruined. To warn you against acts of fraud, robbery, and violence, is not my province ; that is the business of those who make and administer *the law*. I am not talking to you against acts which the jailor and the hangman punish ; nor against those moral offences which all men condemn ; but against indulgences, which, by men in general, are deemed not only harmless, but meritorious ; but which the observation of my whole life has taught me to regard as destructive to human happiness ; and against which all ought to be cautioned even in their boyish days. I have been a great observer, and I can truly say, that I have never known a man, "fond of good eating and drinking," as it is called ; that I have never known such a man (and hundreds I have known) who was worthy of respect.

26. Such indulgences are, in the first place, very *expensive*. The materials are costly, and the preparations still more so. What a monstrous thing, that, in order to satisfy the appetite of a man, there must be a person or two *at work every day!* More fuel, culinary implements, kitchen-room : what ! all these merely to tickle the palate of four or five people, and especially people who can hardly pay their way ! And, then, the *loss of time* : the time spent in pleasing the palate : it is truly horrible to behold people, who ought to be at work, sitting, at the three meals, not less than three of the about fourteen hours that they are out of their beds ! A youth, habituat-

ed to this sort of indulgence, cannot be valuable to any employer. Such a youth cannot be deprived of his table enjoyments on any account: his eating and drinking form the momentous concern of his life: if business interfere with that, the business must give way. A young man, some years ago, offered himself to me, on a particular occasion, as an *amannuensis*, for which he appeared to be perfectly qualified. The terms were settled, and I, who wanted the job dispatched, requested him to sit down, and begin; but he, looking out of the window, whence he could see the church clock, said, somewhat hastily, "I *cannot* stop now, sir, I must go to *dinner*." "Oh!" said I, "you *must* go to dinner, must you! Let the dinner, which you *must* wait upon to-day, have your constant services, then; for you and I shall never agree." He had told me that he was in *great distress* for want of employment; and yet, when relief was there before his eyes, he could forego it for the sake of getting at his eating and drinking three or four hours, perhaps, sooner than I should have thought it right for him to leave off work. Such a person cannot be sent from home, except at certain times; he *must* be near the kitchen at three fixed hours of the day: if he be absent more than four or five hours, he is ill-treated. In short, a youth thus pampered is worth nothing as a person to be employed in business.

27. And, as to *friends* and *acquaintances*; they will *say* nothing to you; they will *offer* you indulgences under their roofs; but, the more ready you are to accept of their offers, and, in fact, the better *taste* you discover, the less they will like you, and the sooner they will find means of shaking you off; for, besides the *cost* which you occasion them, people do not like to have *critics* sitting in judgment on their bottles and dishes. *Water-drinkers* are universally *laughed at*; but, it has always seemed to me, that they are amongst the most welcome of guests, and that, too, though the host be by no means of a niggardly turn. The truth is, they give

*no trouble* ; they occasion *no anxiety* to please them ; they are sure not to make their sittings *inconveniently long* ; and, which is the great thing of all, their example teaches *moderation* to the rest of the company. Your notorious “lovers of good cheer” are, on the contrary, not to be invited without *due reflection* : to entertain one of them is a serious business ; and as people are not apt voluntarily to undertake such pieces of business, the well-known “lovers of good eating and drinking” are left, very generally, to enjoy it by themselves and at their own expense.

28. But, all other considerations aside, *health*, the most valuable of all earthly possessions, and without which all the rest are worth nothing, bids us, not only to refrain from *excess* in eating and drinking, but bids us to stop short of what might be indulged in without any apparent impropriety. The words of *ECCLESIASTICUS* ought to be read once a week by every young person in the world, and particularly by the young people of this country at this time. “*Eat modestly that which is set before thee, and devour not, lest thou be hated.* When thou sittest amongst many, reach not thine hand out first of all. *How little is sufficient for man well taught ! A wholesome sleep cometh of a temperate belly.* Such a man *riseth up in the morning*, and is *well at ease with himself*. Be not too hasty of meats ; for excess of meats bringeth sickness, and choleric disease cometh of gluttony. By surfeit have many perished, and he that *dieteth himself prolongeth his life*. Show not thy valiantness in wine ; for wine hath destroyed many. Wine measurably taken, and in season, bringeth gladness and cheerfulness of mind ; but drinking with excess maketh bitterness of mind, brawlings and scoldings.” How true are these words ! How well worthy of a constant place in our memories ! Yet, what pains have been taken to apologise for a life contrary to these precepts ! And, good God ! what punishment can be too great, what mark of infamy sufficiently signal, for those pernicious villains of talent, who have employed that talent in the

composition of *Bacchanalian songs*; that is to say, pieces of fine and captivating writing in praise of one of the most odious and destructive vices in the black catalogue of human depravity!

29. In the passage which I have just quoted from chap. xxxi. of *ECCLESIASTICUS*, it is said, that “wine, *measureably taken, and in season*,” is a *proper thing*. This, and other such passages of the Old Testament, have given a handle to drunkards, and to extravagant people, to insist, that *God intended* that *wine* should be *commonly drunk*. No doubt of that. But, then, he could intend this only *in countries in which he had given wine*, and to which he had given no cheaper drink except *water*. If it be said, as it truly may, that, by the means of the *sea* and the *winds*, he has given wine to all *countries*, I answer that this gift is of no use to us *now*, because our government steps in between the sea and the winds and us. *Formerly*, indeed, the case was different: and, here I am about to give you, incidentally, a piece of *historical knowledge*, which you will not have acquired from Hume, Goldsmith, or any other of the romancers called historians. Before that unfortunate event, the *Protestant Reformation*, as it is called, took place, the price of red wine, in England, was *fourpence a gallon*, Winchester measure; and, of white wine, *sixpence a gallon*. At the same time the pay of a labouring man per day, as fixed by law, was *fourpence*. Now, when a labouring man could earn *four quarts of good wine in a day*, it was, doubtless, allowable, even in England, for people in the middle rank of life to drink wine *rather commonly*; and, therefore, in those happy days of England, these passages of Scripture were applicable enough. But, *now* when we have got a *Protestant* government, which by the taxes which it makes people pay to it, causes the *eighth part of a gallon* of wine to cost more than the pay of a labouring man for a day; *now*, this passage of Scripture is not applicable to us. There is no “*season*” in which we can take wine without ruining ourselves, however “*measur-*

*ably*" we may take it, and, I beg you to regard, as perverters of Scripture and as seducers of youth, all those who cite passages like that above cited, in justification of, or as an apology for, the practice of wine drinking in England.

30. I beseech you to look again and again at, and to remember every word of, the passage which I have just quoted from the book of Ecclesiasticus. How completely have been, and are, its words verified by my experience and in my person! How little of eating and drinking is sufficient for me! How wholesome is my sleep! How early do I rise; and how "*well at ease*" am I "*with myself!*" I should not have deserved such blessings, if I had withheld from my neighbours a knowledge of the means by which they were obtained; and, therefore, this knowledge I have been in the constant habit of communicating. When one *gives a dinner to a company*, it is an extraordinary affair, and is intended, by sensible men, for purposes other than those of eating and drinking. But, in *general*, in the every-day life, despicable are those who suffer any part of their happiness to depend upon what they have to eat or to drink, provided they have *a sufficiency of wholesome food*; despicable is the *man*, and worse than despicable the *youth*, that would make any sacrifice, however small, whether of money, or of time, or of any thing else, in order to secure a dinner different from that which he would have had without such sacrifice. Who, what man, ever performed a greater quantity of labour than I have performed? What man ever did so much? Now, in a great measure I owe my capability to perform this labour to my disregard of dainties. Being shut up two years in Newgate, with a fine on my head of a thousand pounds to the king, for having expressed my indignation at the flogging of Englishmen under a guard of German bayonets, I ate, during one whole year, one mutton chop every day. Being once in town, with one son (then a little boy) and a clerk, while my family was in the country, I had during some

weeks, nothing but legs of mutton ; first day, leg of mutton boiled or *roasted* ; second, *cold* ; third, *hashed* ; then, leg of mutton *boiled* ; and so on. When I have been by myself, or nearly so, I have *always* proceeded thus : given directions for having *every day the same thing*, or alternately as above, and every day exactly at the same hour, so as to prevent the necessity of any *talk* about the matter. I am certain that, upon an average, I have not, during my life, spent more than *thirty-five minutes a day at table*, including all the meals of the day. I like, and I take care to have, good and clean victuals ; but, if wholesome and clean, that is enough. If I find it, by chance, *too coarse* for my appetite, I put the food aside, or let somebody do it, and leave the appetite to gather keenness. But, the great security of all is, to eat *little*, and to drink nothing that *intoxicates*. He that eats till he is *full* is little better than a beast ; and he that drinks till he is *drunk* is quite a beast.

31. Before I dismiss this affair of eating and drinking, let me beseech you to resolve to free yourselves from the slavery of the *tea* and *coffee* and other *slop-kettle*, if, unhappily, you have been bred up in such slavery. Experience has taught me, that those slops are *injurious to health* ; until I left them off (having taken to them at the age of 26,) even my habits of sobriety, moderate eating, early rising ; even these were not, until I left off the slops, sufficient to give me that complete health which I have since had. I pretend not to be a "doctor ;" but, I assert, that to pour regularly, every day, a pint or two of *warm liquid matter* down the throat, whether under the name of tea, coffee, soup, grog, or whatever else, is greatly injurious to health. However, at present, what I have to represent to *you is the great deduction, which the use of these slops makes, from your power of being useful*, and also from your power to *husband your income*, whatever it may be, and from whatever source arising. I am to suppose you to be desirous to become a clever, and a useful man ; a man to be, if not admired and revered.

at least to be *respected*. In order to merit respect beyond that which is due to very common men, you must do something more than very common men ; and I am now going to show you how your course *must be impeded* by the use of the *slops*.

32. If the women exclaim, "Nonsense ! come and take a cup," take it for that once ; but, hear what I have to say. In answer to my representation regarding the *waste of time* which is occasioned by the *slops*, it has been said, that let what may be the nature of the food, there *must be time* for taking it. Not *so much* time, however, to eat a bit of meat or cheese or butter with a bit of bread. But, these may be eaten in a shop, a warehouse, a factory, far from any *fire*, and even in a carriage on the road. The *slops* absolutely demand *fire* and a *congregation* ; so that, be your business what it may ; be you shop-keeper, farmer, drover, sportsman, traveller, to the *slop-board* you must come ; you must wait for its assembling, or start from home without your breakfast ; and, being used to the warm liquid, you feel out of order for the want of it. If the *slops* were in fashion amongst ploughmen and carters, we must all be starved ; for the food could never be raised. The mechanics are half-ruined by them. Many of them are become poor, enervated creatures ; and chiefly from this cause. But is the positive *cost* nothing ? At boarding-schools, an *additional price* is given on account of the tea *slops*. Suppose you to be a clerk, in hired lodgings, and going to your counting-house at nine o'clock. You get your dinner, perhaps, near to the scene of your work ; but how are you to have the *breakfast slops* without a *servant* ? Perhaps you find a lodging just to suit you, but the house is occupied by people who keep no *servants*, and you want a servant to *light a fire* and get the *slop* ready. You could get this lodging for several shillings a week less than another at the next door ; but *there* they keep a servant, who will "get you your breakfast," and preserve you, benevolent creature as she is, from the cruel necessity of

going to the cupboard and cutting off a slice of meat or cheese and a bit of bread. She will, most likely, toast your bread for you, too, and melt your butter ; and then muffle you up, in winter, and send you out almost swaddled. Really such a thing can hardly be expected ever to become a *man*. You are weak ; you have delicate health ; you are "*bilious!*" Why, my good fellow, it is these very slops that make you weak and bilious ; and, indeed, the *poverty*, the real poverty, that they and their concomitants bring on you, greatly assists, in more ways than one, in producing your "*delicate health*."

33. So much for indulgences in eating, drinking and dress. Next, as to *amusements*. It is recorded, of the famous ALFRED that he devoted eight hours of the twenty-four to *labour*, eight to *rest*, and eight to *recreation*. He was, however, a *king*, and could be *thinking* during the eight hours of recreation. It is certain, that there ought to be hours of recreation, and I do not know that eight are too many ; but, then observe, those hours ought to be *well chosen*, and the *sort* of recreation ought to be attended to. It ought to be such as is at once innocent in itself and in its tendency, and not injurious to health. The sports of the field are the best of all, because they are conducive to health, because they are enjoyed by *day-light*, and because they demand early rising. The nearer that other amusements approach to these, the better they are. A town-life, which many persons are compelled, by the nature of their calling, to lead, precludes the possibility of pursuing amusements of this description to any very considerable extent ; and young men in towns are, generally speaking, compelled to choose between *books* on the one hand, or *gaming* and the *play-house* on the other. *Dancing* is at once rational and healthful : it gives animal spirits : it is the natural amusement of young people, and such it has been from the days of Moses : it is enjoyed in numerous companies : it makes the parties to be pleased with themselves and with all about them : it has no tendency to excite base and

malignant feelings ; and none but the most grovelling and hateful tyranny, or the most stupid and despicable fanaticism, ever raised its voice against it. The bad modern habits of England have created one inconvenience attending the enjoyment of this healthy and innocent pastime ; namely, *late hours*, which are at once injurious to health and destructive of order and of industry. In other countries people dance by *day-light*. Here they do not ; and, therefore, you must, in this respect, submit to the custom, though not without robbing the dancing night of as many hours as you can.

34. As to GAMING, it is always *criminal*, either in itself, or in its tendency. The basis of it is covetousness ; a desire to take from others something, for which you have given, and intend to give, no equivalent. No gambler was ever yet a happy man, and very few gamblers have escaped being miserable ; and, observe, to *game for nothing* is still gaming, and naturally leads to gaming for something. It is sacrificing time, and that, too, for the worst of purposes. I have kept house for nearly forty years ; I have reared a family ; I have entertained as many friends as most people ; and I have never had cards, dice, a chess-board, nor any implement of gaming, under my roof. The hours that young men spend in this way are hours *murdered*, precious hours, that ought to be spent either in reading or in writing, or in rest, preparatory to the duties of the dawn. Though I do not agree with the base and nauseous flatterers, who now declare the army to be *the best school for statesmen*, it is certainly a school in which to learn experimentally many useful lessons ; and, in this school I learned, that men, fond of gaming, are very rarely, if ever trust-worthy. I have known many a clever man rejected in the way of promotion only because he was addicted to gaming. Men, in that state of life, cannot *ruin* themselves by gaming, for they possess no fortune, nor money ; but the taste for gaming is always regarded as an indication of a radically bad

disposition ; and I can truly say, that I never in my whole life knew a man, fond of gaming, who was not, in some way or other, a person unworthy of confidence. This vice creeps on by very slow degrees, till, at last, it becomes an ungovernable passion, swallowing up every good and kind feeling of the heart. The gambler, as pourtrayed by REGNARD, in a comedy the translation of which into English resembles the original much about as nearly as Sir JAMES GRAHAM's plagiarisms resembled the Registers on which they had been committed, is a fine instance of the contempt and scorn to which gaming, at last, reduces its votaries ; but, if any young man be engaged in this fatal career, and be not yet wholly lost, let him behold HOGARTH's gambler just when he has made his *last throw*, and when disappointment has bereft him of his senses. If after this sight, he remain obdurate, he is doomed to be a disgrace to his name.

35. The *Theatre* may be a source not only of amusement but also of instruction ; but, as things now are in this country, what, that is not bad, is to be learned in this school ? In the first place not a word is allowed to be uttered on the stage, which has not been previously approved of by the Lord Chamberlain ; that is to say, by a person appointed by the Ministry, who, at his pleasure allows, or disallows, of any piece, or any words in a piece, submitted to his inspection. In short, those who go to play-houses, *pay their money to hear uttered such words as the government approve of, and no others.* It is now just twenty-six years since I first well understood how this matter was managed ; and, from that moment to this, I have never been in an English play-house. Besides this, the meanness, the abject servility, of the players, and the slavish conduct of the audience, are sufficient to corrupt and debase the heart of any young man, who is a frequent beholder of them. Homage is here paid to every one clothed with power, be he who or what he may ; real virtue and public-spirit are subjects of ridicule ; and mock-sen-

timent and mock-liberality and mock-loyalty are applauded to the skies.

36. "Show me a man's *companions*," says the proverb, "and I will tell you *what the man is*;" and this is, and must be true ; because all men seek the society of those who think and act somewhat like themselves ; sober men will not associate with drunkards, frugal men will not like spendthrifts, and the orderly and decent shun the noisy, the disorderly, and the debauched. It is for the very vulgar to herd together as singers, ringers and smokers ; but, there is a class rather higher still more blameable ; I mean the tavern-haunters, the gay companions, who herd together to do little but *talk*, and who are so fond of talk that they go from home to get at it. The conversation amongst such persons has nothing of instruction in it, and is generally of a vicious tendency. Young people naturally and commendably seek the society of those of their own age ; but, be careful in choosing your companions ; and lay this down as a rule never to be departed from, that no youth, nor man, ought to be called your *friend*, who is addicted to *indecent talk*, or who is fond of the *society of prostitutes*. Either of these argues a depraved taste, and even a depraved heart ; an absence of all principle and of all trust-worthiness ; and, I have remarked it all my life long, that young men, addicted to these vices, never succeed in the end, whatever advantages they may have, whether in fortune or in talent. Fond mothers and fathers are but too apt to be over-lenient to such offenders ; and, as long as youth lasts and fortune smiles, the punishment is deferred ; but, it comes at last ; it is sure to come ; and the gay, and dissolute youth is a dejected and miserable man. After the early part of a life spent in illicit indulgences, a man is *unworthy* of being the husband of a virtuous woman ; and, if he have any thing like justice in him, how is he to reprove, in his children, vices in which he himself so long indulged ? These vices of youth are varnished over by the saying, that there must be time for "sowing the *wild*

*oats*,” and that “ *wildest colts* make the *best horses*.” These figurative oats are, however, generally like the literal ones ; they are *never to be eradicated from the soil* ; and as to the *colts*, wildness in them is an indication of *high animal spirit*, having nothing at all to do with the *mind*, which is invariably debilitated and debased by profligate indulgences. Yet this miserable piece of sophistry, the offspring of parental weakness, is in constant use, to the incalculable injury of the rising generation. What so amiable as a steady, trust-worthy boy ? He is of *real use* at an early age : he can be trusted far out of the sight of parent or employer, while the “ *pickle*,” as the poor fond parents call the profligate, is a great deal worse than useless, because there must be some one to see that he does no harm. If you have to choose, choose companions of *your own rank in life* as nearly as may be ; but, at any rate, none to whom you acknowledge *inferiority* ; for, slavery is too soon learned ; and, if the mind be bowed down in the youth, it will seldom rise up in the man. In the schools of those best of teachers, the JESUITS, there is perfect equality as to rank in life ; the boy, who enters there, leaves all family pride behind him : intrinsic merit alone is the standard of preference ; and the masters are so scrupulous upon this head, that they do not suffer one scholar, of whatever rank, to have more money to spend than the poorest. These wise men know well the mischiefs that must arise from inequality of pecuniary means amongst their scholars : they know how injurious it would be to learning, if deference were, by the learned, paid to the dunce ; and they, therefore, take the most effectual means to prevent it. Hence, amongst other causes, it is, that their scholars have, ever since the existence of their Order, been the most celebrated for learning of any men in the world.

37. In your *manners* be neither boorish nor blunt, but, even these are preferable to simpering and crawling. I wish every English youth could see those of the United States of America ; always *civil*,

never *servile*. Be *obedient*, where obedience is due ; for, it is no act of meanness, and no indication of want of spirit, to yield implicit and ready obedience to those who have a right to demand it at your hands. In this respect England has been, and, I hope, always will be, an example to the whole world. To this habit of willing and prompt obedience in apprentices, in servants, in all inferiors in station, she owes, in a great measure, her multitudes of matchless merchants, tradesmen, and workmen of every description, and also the achievements of her armies and navies. It is no disgrace, but the contrary, to obey, cheerfully, lawful and just commands. None are so saucy and disobedient as slaves ; and, when you come to read history, you will find that in proportion as nations have been *free* has been their reverence for the laws. But, there is a wide difference between lawful and cheerful obedience and that servility which represents people as laying petitions "at the *king's feet*," which makes us imagine that we behold the supplicants actually crawling upon their bellies. There is something so abject in this expression ; there is such horrible self-abasement in it, that I do hope that every youth, who shall read this, will hold in detestation the reptiles who make use of it. In all other countries, the lowest individual can put a petition into the *hands* of the chief magistrate, be he king or emperor : let us hope, that the time will yet come when Englishmen will be able to do the same. In the meanwhile I beg you to despise these worse than pagan parasites.

38. Hitherto I have addressed you chiefly relative to the things to be *avoided* : let me now turn to the things which you ought *to do*. And, first of all, the *husbanding of your time*. The respect that you will receive, the real and *sincere respect*, will depend entirely on what you are able *to do*. If you be rich, you may purchase what is called respect ; but, it is not worth having. To obtain respect worth possessing you must, as I observed before, do more than

the common run of men in your state of life ; and, to be enabled to do this, you must manage well *your time* : and, to manage it well, you must have as much of the *day-light* and as little of the *candle-light* as is consistent with the due discharge of your duties. When people get into the habit of sitting up *merely for the purpose of talking*, it is no easy matter to break themselves of it ; and if they do not go to bed early, they cannot rise early. Young people require more sleep than those that are grown up : there must be the number of hours, and that number cannot well be, on an average, less than *eight* : and, if it be more in winter time, it is all the better ; for, an hour in bed is better than an hour spent over fire and candle in an idle gossip. People never should sit talking till they do not know what to talk about. It is said by the country-people, that one hour's sleep before midnight is worth more than two are worth after midnight, and this I believe to be a fact ; but, it is useless to go to bed early and even to rise early, if the time be not well employed after rising. In general, half the morning is *loitered* away, the party being in a sort of half-dressed half-naked state ; out of bed, indeed, but still in a sort of bedding. Those who first invented *morning-gowns* and *slippers* could have very little else to do. These things are very suitable to those who have had fortunes gained for them by others : very suitable to those who have nothing to do, and who merely live for the purpose of assisting to consume the produce of the earth ; but, he who has his bread to earn, or who means to be worthy of respect on account of his labours, has no business with morning gown and slippers. In short, be your business or calling what it may, *dress at once for the day* ; and learn to do it *as quickly* as possible. A looking-glass is a piece of furniture a great deal worse than useless. *Looking* at the face will not alter its shape or its colour ; and, perhaps, of all wasted time, none is so foolishly wasted as that which is employed in surveying one's own face. Nothing can be of *little* im-

portance, if one be compelled to attend to it *every day of our lives*: if we *shaved* but once a year, or once a month, the execution of the thing would be hardly worth naming: but, this is a piece of work that must be done once every day; and, as it may cost only about *five minutes* of time, and may be, and frequently is, made to cost *thirty*, or even *fifty minutes*; and, as only fifteen minutes make about a fifty-eighth part of the hours of our average daylight; this being the case, this is a matter of real importance. I once heard SIR JOHN SINCLAIR ask Mr. COCHRANE JOHNSTONE, whether he meant to have a son of his (then a little boy) taught Latin? "No," said Mr. Johnstone, "but I mean to do something a great deal better for him." "What is that?" said Sir John. "Why," said the other, "teach him *to shave with cold water and without a glass*." Which, I dare say, he did; and, for which benefit, I am sure that son has had good reason to be grateful. Only think of the inconvenience attending the common practice! There must be *hot water*; to have this there must be *a fire*, and, in some cases, a fire for that purpose alone; to have these, there must be a *servant*, or you must light a fire yourself. For the want of these, the job is put off until a later hour: this causes a stripping and *another dressing bout*; or, you go in a slovenly state all that day, and the next day the thing must be done, or cleanliness must be abandoned altogether. If you be on a journey you must wait the pleasure of the servants at the inn before you can dress and set out in the morning; the pleasant time for travelling is gone before you can move from the spot; instead of being at the end of your day's journey in good time, you are benighted, and have to endure all the great inconveniences attendant on tardy movements. And, all this, from the apparently insignificant affair of *shaving*! How many a piece of important business has failed from a short delay! And how many thousand of such delays daily proceed from this unworthy cause! '*Toujours prêt*' was the motto of a famous French

general; and, pray, let it be yours: be "*always ready*;" and never, during your whole life, have to say, "*I cannot go till I be shaved and dressed.*" Do the whole at once for the day, whatever may be your state of life; and then you have a day unbroken by those indispensable performances. Begin thus, in the days of your youth, and, having felt the superiority which this practice will give you over those in all other respects your equals, the practice will stick by you to the end of your life. Till you be shaved and dressed for the day, you cannot set steadily about any business; you know that you must presently quit your labour to return to the dressing affair; you, therefore, put it off until that be over; the interval, the precious interval, is spent in lounging about; and, by the time that you are ready for business, the best part of the day is gone.

39. Trifling as this matter appears upon *naming* it, it is, in fact, one of the great concerns of life; and, for my part, I can truly say, that I owe more of my great labours to my strict adherence to the precepts that I have here given you, than to all the natural abilities with which I have been endowed; for these, whatever may have been their amount, would have been of comparatively little use, even aided by great sobriety and abstinence, if I had not, in early life, contracted the blessed habit of husbanding well my time. To this, more than to any other thing, I owed my very extraordinary promotion in the army. I was *always ready*: if I had to mount guard at *ten*, I was ready at *nine*: never did any man, or any thing, wait one moment for me. Being, at an age *under twenty years*, raised from Corporal to Sergeant Major *at once*, over the heads of thirty sergeants, I naturally should have been an object of envy and hatred; but this habit of early rising and of rigid adherence to the precepts which I have given you, really subdued these passions; because every one felt, that what I did he had never done, and never could do. Before my promotion, a clerk was wanted to make out the morning report of the regiment.

I rendered the clerk unnecessary ; and, long before any other man was dressed for the parade, my work for the morning was all done, and I myself was on the parade, walking, in fine weather, for an hour perhaps. My custom was this : to get up, in summer, at day-light, and in winter at four o'clock ; shave, dress, even to the putting of my sword-belt over my shoulder, and having my sword lying on the table before me, ready to hang by my side. Then I ate a bit of cheese, or pork, and bread. Then I prepared my report, which was filled up as fast as the companies brought me in the materials. After this I had an hour or two to read, before the time came for any duty out of doors, unless when the regiment or part of it went out to exercise in the morning. When this was the case, and the matter was left to me, I always had it on the ground in such time as that the bayonets glistened in the *rising sun*, a sight which gave me delight, of which I often think, but which I should in vain endeavour to describe. If the *officers* were to go out, eight or ten o'clock was the hour, sweating the men in the heat of the day, breaking in upon the time for cooking their dinner, putting all things out of order, and all men out of humour. When I was commander, the men had a long day of leisure before them : they could ramble into the town or into the woods ; go to get raspberries, to catch birds, to catch fish, or to pursue any other recreation, and such of them as chose, and were qualified, to work at their trades. So that here, arising solely from the early habits of one very young man, were pleasant and happy days given to hundreds.

40. *Money* is said to be *power*, which is, in some cases, true ; and the same may be said of *knowledge* ; but superior *sobriety*, *industry* and *activity*, are a still more certain source of power ; for without these, *knowledge* is of little use ; and, as to the power which *money* gives, it is that of *brute force*, it is the power of the bludgeon and the bayonet, and of the bribed press, tongue and pen. Superior sobriety,

industry, activity, though accompanied with but a moderate portion of knowledge, command respect, because they have great and visible influence. The drunken, the lazy, and the inert, stand abashed before the sober and the active. Besides, all those whose interests are at stake prefer, of necessity, those whose exertions produce the greatest and most immediate and visible effect. Self-interest is no respecter of persons: it asks, not who knows best what ought to be done, but who is most likely to do it: we may, and often do, admire the talents of lazy and even dissipated men, but we do not trust them with the care of our interests. If, therefore, you would have respect and influence in the circle in which you move, be more sober, more industrious, more active than the general run of those amongst whom you live.

41. As to EDUCATION, this word is now applied exclusively to things which are taught in schools; but, *education* means *rearing up*, and the French speak of the education of *pigs* and *sheep*. In a very famous French book on rural affairs, there is a Chapter entitled "*Education du cochon*;" that is, *education of the hog*. The word has the same meaning in both languages; for, both take it from the Latin. Neither is the word LEARNING properly confined to things taught in schools, or by books; for, *learning* means *knowledge*; and, but a comparatively small part of useful knowledge comes from books. Men are not to be called *ignorant* merely because they cannot make upon paper certain marks with a pen, or because they do not know the meaning of such marks when made by others. A ploughman may be very *learned* in his line, though he does not know what the letters *p. l. o. u. g. h* mean when he sees them combined upon paper. The first thing to be required of a man is, that he understand well his own *calling*, or *profession*; and, be you in what state of life you may, to acquire this knowledge ought to be your first and greatest care. A man who has had a new-built house tumble down, will derive little

more consolation from being told that the architect is a great astronomer, than this distressed nation now derives from being assured that its distresses arise from the measures of a long list of the greatest orators and greatest heroes that the world ever beheld.

42. Nevertheless, book-learning is by no means to be despised ; and it is a thing which may be laudably sought after by persons in all states of life. In those pursuits which are called *professions*, it is necessary, and also, in certain trades ; and, in persons in the middle ranks of life, a total absence of such learning is somewhat disgraceful. There is, however, one danger to be carefully guarded against ; namely, the opinion, that your genius, or your literary acquirements, are such as to warrant you in disregarding the calling in which you are, and by which you gain your bread. Parents must have an uncommon portion of solid sense to counterbalance their natural affection sufficiently to make them competent judges in such a case. Friends are partial ; and those who are not, you deem enemies. Stick, therefore, to *the shop* ; rely upon your mercantile or mechanical or professional calling ; try your strength in literature, if you like ; but, *rely* on the shop. If BLOOMFIELD, who wrote a poem called the FARMER'S BOY, had placed no *reliance* on the faithless muses, his unfortunate and much to be pitied family would, in all probability, have not been in a state to solicit relief from charity. I remember that this loyal shoemaker was flattered to the skies, and (ominous sign, if he had understood it) feasted at the tables of some of the great. Have, I beseech you, no hope of this sort : and, if you find it creeping towards your heart, drive it instantly away as the mortal foe of your independence and your peace.

43. With this precaution, however, book-learning is not only proper, but highly commendable ; and portions of it are absolutely necessary in every case of trade or profession. One of these portions is distinct reading, plain and neat writing, and *arithmetic*.

The two former are mere child's work ; the latter not quite so easily acquired, but equally indispensable, and of it you ought to have a thorough knowledge before you attempt to study even the grammar of your own language. Arithmetic is soon learned ; it is not a thing that requires much natural talent ; it is not a thing that loads the memory or puzzles the mind ; and, it is a thing of *every-day utility*. Therefore, this is, to a certain extent, an absolute necessary ; an indispensable acquisition. Every man is not to be a *surveyor* or an *actuary* ; and, therefore, you may stop far short of the knowledge, of this sort, which is demanded by these professions ; but, as far as common accounts and calculations go, you ought to be perfect ; and this you may make yourself, without any assistance from a master, by bestowing upon this science, during six months, only one half of the time that is, by persons of your age, usually wasted over the tea-slops, or other kettle-slops, alone ! If you become *fond* of this science, there may be a little danger of wasting your time on it. When, therefore, you have got as much of it as your business or profession can possibly render necessary, turn the time to some other purpose. As to *books*, on this subject, they are in every body's hand ; but, there is *one book* on the subject of calculations, which I must point out to you ; "THE CAMEIST," by Dr. KELLY. This is a bad title, because, to men in general, it gives no idea of what the book treats of. It is a book, which shows the value of the several pieces of money of one country when stated in the money of another country. For instance, it tells us what a Spanish Dollar, a Dutch Dollar, a French Franc, and so on, is worth in English money. It does the same with regard to *weights* and *measures* : and it extends its information to *all the countries in the world*. It is a work of rare merit ; and every youth, be his state of life what it may, if it permit him to pursue book-learning of any sort, and particularly if he be destined, or at all likely to meddle with commercial matters, ought, as soon

as convenient, to possess this valuable and instructive book.

44. The next thing is the GRAMMAR of your own language. Without understanding this, you can never hope to become fit for any thing beyond mere trade or agriculture. It is true, that we do (God knows!) but too often see men have great wealth, high titles, and boundless power heaped upon them, who can hardly write ten lines together correctly ; but, remember, it is not *merit* that has been the cause of their advancement ; the cause has been, in almost every such case, the subserviency of the party to the will of some government, and the baseness of some nation who have quietly submitted to be governed by brazen fools. Do not you imagine, that you will have luck of this sort : do not you hope to be rewarded and honoured for that ignorance which shall prove a scourge to your country, and which will earn you the curses of the children yet unborn. Rely you upon your merit, and upon nothing else. Without a knowledge of grammar, it is impossible for you to write correctly, and, it is by mere accident if you speak correctly ; and, pray bear in mind, that all well-informed persons judge of a man's mind (until they have other means of judging) by his writing or speaking. The labour necessary to acquire this knowledge is, indeed, not trifling : grammar is not, like arithmetic, a science consisting of several distinct departments, some of which may be dispensed with : it is a whole, and the whole must be learned, or, no part is learned. The subject is abstruse : it demands much reflection and much patience : but, when once the task is performed, it is performed *for life*, and in every day of that life it will be found to be, in a greater or less degree, a source of pleasure or of profit or of both together. And, what is the labour ? It consists of no bodily exertion ; it exposes the student to no cold, no hunger, no sufferings of any sort. The study need subtract from the hours of no business, nor, indeed, from the hours of necessary exercise : the hours usually spent on

the tea and coffee slops and in the mere gossip which accompany them ; those wasted hours of only *one year*, employed in the study of English grammar, would make you a correct speaker and writer for the rest of your life. You want no school, no room to study in, no expenses, and no troublesome circumstances of any sort. I learned grammar when I was a private soldier on the pay of sixpence a day. The edge of my berth, or that of the guard-bed, was my seat to study in ; my knapsack was my book-case ; a bit of board, lying on my lap, was my writing-table ; and the task did not demand any thing like a year of my life. I had no money to purchase candle or oil ; in winter-time it was rarely that I could get any evening-light but that of *the fire*, and only my *turn* even of that. And, if I, under such circumstances, and without parent or friend to advise or encourage me, accomplished this undertaking, what excuse can there be for *any youth*, however poor, however pressed with business, or however circumstanced as to room or other conveniences ? To buy a pen or a sheet of paper I was compelled to forego some portion of food, though in a state of half starvation ; I had no moment of time that I could call my own ; and I had to read and to write amidst the talking, laughing, singing, whistling and brawling of at least half a score of the most thoughtless of men, and that, too, in the hours of their freedom from all control. Think not lightly of the *farthing* that I had to give, now and then, for ink, pen, or paper ! That farthing was, alas ! a *great sum* to me ! I was as tall as I am now ; I had great health and great exercise. The whole of the money, not expended for us at market, was *two-pence a week* for each man. I remember, and well I may ! that, upon one occasion I, after all absolutely necessary expenses, had, on a Friday, made shift to have a half-penny in reserve, which I had destined for the purchase of a *red-herring* in the morning ; but, when I pulled off my clothes at night, so hungry then as to be hardly able to endure life, I found that I had *lost my half-penny* !

I buried my head under the miserable sheet and rug, and cried like a child ! And, again I say, if I, under circumstances like these, could encounter and overcome this task, is there, can there be, in the whole world, a youth to find an excuse for the non-performance ? What youth, who shall read this, will not be ashamed to say, that he is not able to find time and opportunity for this most essential of all the branches of book-learning ?

45. I press this matter with such earnestness, because a knowledge of grammar is the foundation of all literature ; and because without this knowledge opportunities for writing and speaking are only occasions for men to display their unfitness to write and speak. How many false pretenders to erudition have I exposed to shame merely by my knowledge of grammar ! How many of the insolent and ignorant great and powerful have I pulled down and made little and despicable ! And, with what ease have I conveyed upon numerous important subjects, information and instruction to millions now alive, and provided a store of both for millions yet unborn ! As to the course to be pursued in this great undertaking, it is, first, to read the grammar from the first word to the last, very attentively, several times over ; then, to copy the whole of it very correctly and neatly ; and then to study the Chapters one by one. And what does this reading and writing require as to time ? Both together not more than the tea-slops and their gossips for *three months* ! There are about three hundred pages in my English Grammar. Four of those little pages in a day, which is a mere trifle of work, do the thing in *three months*. Two hours a day are quite sufficient for the purpose ; and these may, in any *town* that I have ever known, or in any village, be taken from that part of the morning during which the main part of the people are in bed. I do not like the evening-candle-light work : it wears the eyes much more than the same sort of light in the morning, because then the faculties are in vigour and wholly unexhausted. But for this purpose there

is sufficient of that day-light which is usually wasted ; usually gossipped or lounged away ; or spent in some other manner productive of no pleasure, and generally producing pain in the end. It is very becoming in all persons, and particularly in the young, to be civil and even polite : but, it becomes neither young nor old to have an everlasting simper on their faces, and their bodies sawing in an everlasting bow : and, how many youths have I seen who, if they had spent, in the learning of grammar, a tenth part of the time that they have consumed in earning merited contempt for their affected gentility, would have laid the foundation of sincere respect towards them for the whole of their lives !

46. *Perseverance* is a prime quality in every pursuit, and particularly in this. Yours is, too, the time of life to acquire this inestimable habit. Men fail much oftener from want of perseverance than from want of talent and of good disposition : as the race was not to the hare but to the tortoise ; so the meed of success in study is to him who is not in haste, but to him who proceeds with a steady and even step. It is not to a want of taste or of desire or of disposition to learn that we have to ascribe the rareness of good scholars, so much as to the want of patient perseverance. Grammar is a branch of knowledge, like all other things of high value, it is of difficult acquirement : the study is dry ; the subject is intricate ; it engages not the passions ; and, if the *great end* be not kept constantly in view ; if you lose, for a moment, sight of the *ample reward*, indifference begins, that is followed by weariness, and disgust and despair close the book. To guard against this result be not in *haste* ; keep *steadily on* ; and, when you find weariness approaching, rouse yourself, and remember, that, if you give up, all that you have done has been done in vain. This is a matter of great moment ; for out of every ten, who undertake this task, there are, perhaps, nine who abandon it in despair ; and this, too, merely for the want of resolution to overcome the first approaches of wea-

riness. The most effectual means of security against this mortifying result is to lay down a rule to write or to read a certain fixed quantity *every day*, Sunday excepted. Our minds are not always in the same state; they have not, at all times, the same elasticity; to-day we are full of hope on the very same grounds, which, to-morrow, afford us no hope at all: every human being is liable to those flows and ebbs of the mind; but, if reason interfere, and bid you *overcome the fits of lassitude*, and almost mechanically to go on without the stimulus of hope, the buoyant fit speedily returns; you congratulate yourself that you did not yield to the temptation to abandon your pursuit, and you proceed with more vigour than ever. Five or six triumphs over temptation to indolence or despair lay the foundation of certain success; and, what is of still more importance, fix in you the *habit of perseverance*.

47. If I have bestowed a large portion of my space on this topic, it has been because I know, from experience as well as from observation, that it is of more importance than all the other branches of book-learning put together. It gives you, when you possess it thoroughly, a real and practical superiority over the far greater part of men. How often did I experience this even long before I became what is called an author! The *Adjutant*, under whom it was my duty to act when I was a Sergeant Major, was, as almost all military officers are, or, at least *were*, a very illiterate man, perceiving that every sentence of mine was in the same form and manner as sentences in *print*, became shy of letting me see pieces of *his* writing. The writing of *orders*, and other things, therefore, fell to me; and thus, though no nominal addition was made to my pay, and no nominal addition to my authority, I acquired the latter as effectually as if a law had been passed to confer it upon me. In short, I owe to the possession of this branch of knowledge every thing that has enabled me to do so many things that very few other men have done, and that now gives me a degree of

influence, such as is possessed by few others, in the most weighty concerns of the country. The possession of this branch of knowledge raises you in your own esteem, gives just confidence in yourself, and prevents you from being the willing slave of the rich and the titled part of the community. It enables you to discover that riches and titles do not confer merit ; you think comparatively little of them ; and, as far as relates to you, at any rate, their insolence is innoxious.

48. Hoping that I have said enough to induce you to set resolutely about the study of *grammar*, I might here leave the subject of *learning* ; arithmetic and grammar, both *well learned*, being as much as I would wish in a mere youth. But these need not occupy the whole of your spare time ; and, there are other branches of learning which ought immediately to follow. If your own calling or profession require book-study, books treating of that are to be preferred to all others ; for, the first thing, the first object in life, is to secure the honest means of obtaining sustenance, raiment, and a state of being suitable to your rank, be that rank what it may ; excellence in your own calling is, therefore, the first thing to be aimed at. After this may come *general knowledge*, and of this, the first is a thorough knowledge of *your own country* ; for, how ridiculous is it to see an English youth engaged in reading about the customs of the Chinese, or of the Hindoos, while he is content to be totally ignorant of those of Kent or of Cornwall ! Well employed he must be in ascertaining how Greece was divided and how the Romans parcelled out their territory, while he knows not, and, apparently, does not want to know, how England came to be divided into counties, hundreds, parishes and tithings.

49. **GEOGRAPHY** naturally follows **Grammar** ; and, you should begin with that of this kingdom, which you ought to understand well, perfectly well, before you venture to look abroad. A rather slight knowledge of the divisions and customs of other countries

is, generally speaking, sufficient; but, not to know these full well, as far as relates to our own country, is, in one who pretends to be a gentleman or a scholar, somewhat disgraceful. Yet, how many men are there, and those called *gentlemen* too, who seem to think that counties and parishes, and churches and parsons, and tithes and glebes, and manors and courts-leet, and paupers and poor-houses, all grew up in England, or dropped down upon it, immediately after Noah's flood! Surely, it is necessary for every man, having any pretensions to scholarship, to know *how these things came*; and, the sooner this knowledge is acquired the better; for, until it be acquired you read the *history* of your country in vain. Indeed, to communicate this knowledge is one main part of the business of history; but it is a part which no historian, commonly so called, has, that I know of, ever yet performed, except, in part, myself, in the History of the PROTESTANT REFORMATION. I had read HUME'S History of England and the Continuation by SMOLLETT; but, in 1802, when I wanted to write on the subject of the *non-residence of the clergy*, I found, to my great mortification, that I knew nothing of the foundation of the office and the claims of the parsons, and that I could not even guess at the *origin of parishes*. This gave a new turn to my inquiries; and I soon found the romancers, called historians, had given me no information that I could rely on, and, besides, had done, apparently, all they could to keep me in the dark.

50. When you come to HISTORY, begin also with that of *your own country*; and here it is my boun-  
den duty to put you *well on your guard*; for, in this respect we are *peculiarly* unfortunate, and for the following reasons, to which I beg you to attend. Three *hundred years ago*, the religion of England had been, during *nine hundred years*, the Catholic religion: the Catholic Clergy possessed about a third part of all the lands and houses, which they held *in trust* for their own support, for the *building and repairing of churches*, and for the relief of the poor,

the widow, the orphan and the stranger; but, at the time just mentioned, the king and the aristocracy changed the religion to *Protestant*, took the estates of the church and the poor *to themselves as their own property*, and *taxed the people at large* for the building and repairing of churches and for the relief of the poor. This great and terrible change, effected partly by force against the people and partly by the most artful means of deception, gave rise to a series of efforts, which has been continued from that day *to this*, to cause us all to believe, *that that change was for the better*, that it was *for our good*; and that, *before that time*, our forefathers were a set of the most miserable slaves that the sun ever warmed with his beams. It happened, too, that the *art of printing* was not discovered, or, at least, it was very little understood, until about the time when this change took place; so that the books relating to former times were confined to manuscript; and, besides, even these manuscript libraries were destroyed with great care by those who had made the change and had grasped the property of the poor and the church. Our "*Historians*," as they are called, have written under *fear* of the powerful, or have been *bribed* by them; and, generally speaking, both at the same time; and, accordingly, their works are, as far as they relate to former times, masses of lies unmatched by any others that the world has ever seen.

51. The great object of these lies always has been to make the main body of the people believe, that the nation is now more happy, more populous, more powerful, *than it was before it was Protestant*, and thereby to induce us to conclude, that it was *a good thing for us* that the aristocracy should take to themselves the property of the poor and the church, and make the people at large *pay taxes for the support of both*. This has been, and still is, the great object of all those heaps of lies; and those lies are continually spread about amongst us in all forms of publication, from heavy folios down to half-penny

tracts. In refutation of those lies we have only very few and rare ancient books to refer to, and their information is incidental, seeing that their authors never dreamed of the possibility of the lying generations which were to come. We have the ancient acts of parliament, the common-law, the customs, the canons of the church, and *the churches themselves*; but these demand *analyses* and *argument*, and they demand also a *really free press*, and *unprejudiced and patient readers*. Never in this world, before, had truth to struggle with so many and such great disadvantages!

52. To refute lies is not, at present, my business; but it is my business to give you, in as small a compass as possible, one striking proof that they are lies; and, thereby, to put you well upon your guard for the whole of the rest of your life. The opinion sedulously inculcated by these "*historians*" is this; that before the *Protestant* times came, England was, comparatively, an insignificant country, *having few people in it, and those few wretchedly poor and miserable*. Now, take the following *undeniable facts*. All the parishes in England are now (except where they have been *united*, and two, three, or four, have been made into one) in point of *size*, what they were *a thousand years ago*. The county of Norfolk is the best cultivated of any one in England. This county has *now* 731 parishes; and the number was formerly greater. Of these parishes, 22 *have now no churches at all*; 74 contain less than 100 souls each: and 268 have *no parsonage-houses*. Now, observe, every parish had, in old times, a church and a parsonage-house. The county contains 2,092 square miles; that is to say, something less than 3 square miles to each parish, and that is 1,920 statute acres of land; and the size of each parish is, on an average, that of a piece of ground about one mile and a half each way; so that the churches are, even now, on an average, only about *a mile and a half from each other*. Now, the questions for you to put to yourself are these: Were churches formerly built

and kept up *without being wanted*, and especially by a poor and miserable people? Did these miserable people build 74 churches out of 731, each of which 74 had not a hundred souls belonging to it? Is it a sign of an augmented population, that 22 churches out of 731 have tumbled down and been effaced? Was it a country *thinly* inhabited by miserable people that could build and keep a church in every piece of ground a mile and a half each way, besides having, in this same county, 77 monastic establishments and 142 free chapels? Is it a sign of augmented population, ease and plenty, that, out of 731 parishes, 268 have suffered the parsonage-houses to fall into ruins, and their sites to become patches of nettles and of brambles? Put these questions calmly to yourself: common sense will dictate the answers; and truth will call for an expression of your indignation against the lying historians and the still more lying population mongers.

---

## LETTER II.

TO A YOUNG MAN.

---

53. In the foregoing letter I have given my advice to a Youth. In addressing myself to you, I am to presume that you have entered upon your present stage of life, having acted upon the precepts contained in that letter; and that, of course, you are a sober, abstinent, industrious and well-informed young man. In the succeeding letters, which will be addressed to the *Lover*, the *Husband*, the *Father*, and the *Citizen*, I shall, of course, have to include my notion of your duties as a *master*, and as a person employed by *another*. In the present letter, therefore, I shall confine myself principally to the con-

duct of a young man with regard to the management of his means, or money.

54. Be you in what line of life you may, it will be amongst your misfortunes if you have not time properly to attend to this matter; for it very frequently happens, it has happened to thousands upon thousands, not only to be ruined, according to the common acceptation of the word; not only to be made poor, and to suffer from poverty, in consequence of want of attention to pecuniary matters; but it has frequently, and even generally happened, that a want of attention to these matters has impeded the progress of science, and of genius itself. A man, oppressed with pecuniary cares and dangers, must be next to a miracle, if he have his mind in a state fit for intellectual labours; to say nothing of the temptations, arising from such distress, to abandon good principles, to suppress useful opinions and useful facts; and, in short, to become a disgrace to his kindred, and an evil to his country, instead of being an honour to the former and a blessing to the latter. To be poor and independent is very nearly an impossibility.

55. But, then, poverty is not a positive, but a relative term. BURKE observed, and very truly, that a labourer who earned a sufficiency to maintain him as a labourer, and to maintain him in a suitable manner; to give him a sufficiency of good food, of clothing, of lodging, and of fuel, ought not to be called *a poor man*: for that, though he had little riches, though his, *compared* with that of a lord, was a state of poverty, it was not a state of poverty in itself. When, therefore, I say that poverty is the cause of a depression of spirit, of inactivity and of servility in men of literary talent, I must say, at the same time, that the evil arises from their own fault; from their having created for themselves imaginary wants; from their having indulged in unnecessary enjoyments, and from their having caused that to be poverty, which would not have been poverty, if they had been moderate in their enjoyments.

56. As it may be your lot (such has been mine) to live by your literary talent, I will, here, before I proceed to matter more applicable to persons in other states of life, observe, that I cannot form an idea of a mortal more wretched than a man of real talent, compelled to curb his genius, and to submit himself in the exercise of that genius, to those whom he knows to be far inferior to himself, and whom he must despise from the bottom of his soul. The late Mr. WILLIAM GIFFORD, who was the son of a shoemaker at ASHBURTON in Devonshire; who was put to school and sent to the university at the expense of a generous and good clergyman of the name of COOKSON, and who died, the other day, a sort of whipper-in of MURRAY'S QUARTERLY REVIEW; this was a man of real genius; and, to my certain personal knowledge, he detested, from the bottom of his soul, the whole of the paper-money and borough-mongering system, and despised those by whom the system was carried on. But he had imaginary wants; he had been bred up in company with the rich and the extravagant: expensive indulgences had been made necessary to him by habit; and when, in the year 1798, or thereabouts, he had to choose between a bit of bacon, a scrag of mutton, and a lodging at ten shillings a week, on the one side, and made-dishes, wine, a fine house, and a footman, on the other side, he chose the latter. He became the servile Editor of CANNING's Anti-jacobin newspaper; and he, who had more wit and learning than all the rest of the writers put together, became the miserable tool in circulating their attacks upon every thing that was hostile to a system which he deplored and detested. But he secured the made-dishes, the wine, the footman and the coachman. A sinecure as "*clerk of the Foreign Estreats*," gave him 329*l* a year, a double commissionership of the lottery gave him 600*l* or 700*l* more; and, at a later period, his Editorship of the Quarterly Review gave him perhaps as much more. He rolled in his carriage for several years; he fared sumptuously, he was

buried at *Westminster Abbey*, of which his friend and formerly his brother pamphleteer in defence of *PITT* was the *Dean*: and never is he to be heard of more! *Mr. GIFFORD* would have been full as happy, his health would have been better, his life longer, and his name would have lived for ages, if he could have turned to the bit of bacon and scrag of mutton in 1798; for his learning and talents were such, his reasonings so clear and conclusive, and his wit so pointed and keen, that his writings must have been generally read, must have been of long duration; and indeed must have enabled him (he being always a single man) to live in his latter days in as good style as that which he procured by becoming a sinecurist, a pensioner, and a *hack*, all which he was from the moment he lent himself to the *Quarterly Review*. Think of the mortification of such a man, when he was called upon to justify the power-of-imprisonment bill in 1817! But, to go into particulars would be tedious: his life was a life of luxurious misery, than which a worse is not to be imagined.

57. So that poverty is, except where there is an actual want of food and raiment, a thing much more imaginary than real. *The shame of poverty*, the shame of being thought poor, is a great and fatal weakness, though arising in this country, from the fashion of the times themselves. When a *good man*, as in the phraseology of the city, means a *rich man*, we are not to wonder that every one wishes to be thought richer than he is. When adulation is sure to follow wealth, and when contempt would be awarded to many if they were not wealthy, who are spoken of with deference, and even lauded to the skies, because their riches are great and notorious; when this is the case, we are not to be surprised that men are ashamed to be thought to be poor. This is one of the greatest of all the dangers at the outset of life; it has brought thousands and hundreds of thousands to ruin, even to *pecuniary* ruin. One of the most amiable features in the character of American society is this; that men never boast of their rich

es, and never disguise their poverty ; but they talk of both as of any other matter fit for public conversation. No man shuns another because he is poor : no man is preferred to another because he is rich. In hundreds and hundreds of instances, men, not worth a shilling, have been chosen by the people, and entrusted with their rights and interests, in preference to men who ride in their carriages.

58. This shame of being thought poor is not only dishonourable in itself, and fatally injurious to men of talent ; but it is ruinous even in a *pecuniary* point of view, and equally destructive to farmers, traders, and even gentlemen of landed estate. It leads to everlasting efforts to *disguise one's poverty* : the carriage, the servants, the wine, (O, that fatal wine !) the spirits, the decanters, the glasses, all the table apparatus, the dress, the horses, the dinners, the parties, all must be kept up ; not so much because he or she or who keeps or gives them, has any pleasure arising therefrom, as because not to keep and give them, would give rise to a suspicion of *the want of means* so to give and keep ; and thus thousands upon thousands are yearly brought into a state of real poverty by their great *anxiety not to be thought poor*. Look round you, mark well what you behold, and say if this be not the case. In how many instances have you seen most amiable and even most industrious families brought to ruin by nothing but this ! Mark it well : resolve to set this false shame at defiance, and when you have done that, you have laid the first stone of the surest foundation of your future tranquillity of mind. There are thousands of families, at this very moment, who are thus struggling to keep up appearances. The farmers accommodate themselves to circumstances more easily than tradesmen and professional men. They live at a greater distance from their neighbours : they can change their style of living unperceived ; they can banish the decanter, change the dishes for a bit of bacon, make a treat out of a rasher and eggs, and the world is none the wiser all the while. But the tradesman, the

doctor, the attorney, and the trader, cannot make the change so quietly and unseen. The accursed wine, which is a sort of criterion of the style of living, a sort of *scale* to the *plan*, a sort of *key* to the *tune*; this is the thing to banish first of all; because all the rest follow, and come down to their proper level in a short time. The accursed decanter cries footman or waiting maid, puts bells to the side of the wall, screams aloud for carpets; and when I am asked, "Lord, *what* is a glass of wine?" my answer is, that in this country, it is *every thing*; it is the pitcher of the key; it demands all the other unnecessary expenses; it is injurious to health, and must be injurious, every bottle of wine that is drunk containing a certain portion of ardent spirits, besides other drugs, deleterious in their nature; and, of all the friends to the doctors, this fashionable beverage is the greatest. And, which adds greatly to the folly, or, I should say, the real vice in using it, is, that the parties themselves, nine times out of ten, do not drink it by *choice*; do not like it; do not relish it; but use it from mere ostentation, being ashamed to be seen even by their own servants, not to drink wine. At the very moment I am writing this, there are thousands of families in and near London, who daily have wine upon their tables, and who *drink* it too, merely because their own servants should not suspect them to be poor, and not deem them to be genteel; and thus families by thousands are ruined, only because they are ashamed to be thought poor.

59. There is no shame belonging to poverty, which frequently arises from the virtues of the impoverished parties. Not so frequently, indeed, as from vice, folly, and indiscretion; but still very frequently. And as the Scripture tells us, that we are not to "despise the poor *because* he is poor;" so we ought not to honour the rich *because* he is rich. The true way is, to take a fair survey of the character of a man as depicted in his conduct, and to respect him, or despise him, according to a due estimate of that charac-

ter. No country upon earth exhibits so many, as this, of those fatal terminations of life, called suicides. These arise, in nine instances out of ten, from this very source. The victims are, in general, what may be fairly called insane; but their insanity almost always arises from the dread of poverty; not from the dread of a want of the means of sustaining life, or even decent living, but from the dread of being thought or known to be poor; from the dread of what is called falling in the scale of society; a dread which is prevalent hardly in any country but this. Looked at in its true light, what is there in poverty to make a man take away his own life? he is the same man that he was before: he has the same body and the same mind: if he even foresee a great alteration in his dress or his diet, why should he kill himself on that account? Are these all the things that a man wishes to live for? But, such is the fact; so great is the disgrace upon this country, and so numerous and terrible are the evils arising from this dread of being thought to be poor.

60. Nevertheless, men ought to take care of their means, ought to use them prudently and sparingly, and to keep their expenses always within the bounds of their income, be it what it may. One of the effectual means of doing this, is, to purchase with ready money. ST. PAUL says, "*Owe no man any thing:*" and of his numerous precepts this is by no means the least worthy of our attention. *Credit* has been boasted of as a very fine thing: to decry credit seems to be setting oneself up against the opinions of the whole world; and I remember a paper in the FREEHOLDER or the SPECTATOR, published just after the funding system had begun, representing "PUBLIC Credit" as a GODDESS, enthroned in a temple dedicated to her by her votaries, amongst whom she is dispensing blessings of every description. It must be more than forty years since I read this paper, which I read soon after the time when the late Mr. Pitt uttered in Parliament an expression of his anxious hope, that his "name would be inscribed on

“the *monument* which he should raise to *public credit*.” Time has taught me, that PUBLIC CREDIT means, the contracting of debts which a nation never can pay; and I have lived to see this *Goddess* produce effects in my country, which Satan himself never could have produced. It is a very bewitching goddess; and not less fatal in her influence in private than in public affairs. It has been carried in this latter respect to such a pitch, that scarcely any transaction, however low and inconsiderable in amount, takes place in any other way. There is a trade in London, called the “Tally-trade,” by which, household goods, coals, clothing, all sorts of things, are sold upon credit, the seller keeping *a tally*, and receiving payment for the goods, little by little; so that the income and the earnings of the buyers are always anticipated; are always gone, in fact, before they come in or are earned; the sellers receiving, of course, a great deal more than the proper profit.

61. Without supposing you to descend to so low a grade as this, and even supposing you to be lawyer, doctor, parson, or merchant; it is still the same thing, if you purchase on credit, and not perhaps, in a much less degree of disadvantage. Besides the higher price that you pay, there is the temptation to have what you *really do not want*. The cost seems a trifle, when you have not to pay the money until a future time. It has been observed, and very truly observed, that men used to lay out a one-pound note when they would not lay out a sovereign; a consciousness of the intrinsic value of the things produces a retentiveness in the latter case more than in the former: the sight and the touch assist the mind in forming its conclusions, and the one-pound note was parted with when the sovereign would have been kept. Far greater is the difference between credit and ready money. Innumerable things are not bought at all with ready money, which would be bought in case of trust: it is so much easier to *order* a thing than to *pay* for it. A future day; a day of payment must come, to be sure, but that is little thought of

at the time ; but if the money were to be drawn out, the moment the thing was received or offered, this question would arise, “ *Can I do without it ?* ” Is this thing indispensable ; am I compelled to have it, or, suffer a loss or injury greater in amount than the cost of the thing ? If this question were put every time we make a purchase, seldom should we hear of those suicides which are such a disgrace to this country.

62. I am aware, that it will be said, and very truly said, that the concerns of merchants ; that the purchasing of great estates, and various other great transactions, cannot be carried on in this manner ; but these are rare exceptions to the rule : even in these cases there might be much less of bills and bonds, and all the sources of litigation ; but in the every-day business of life, in transactions with the butcher, the baker, the tailor, the shoemaker, what excuse can there be for pleading the example of the merchant, who carries on his work by ships and exchanges ? I was delighted, some time ago, by being told of a young man, who, upon being advised to *keep a little account* of all he received and expended, answered, “ that his business was not to keep account-books : that he was sure not to make a mistake as to his income ; and, that as to his expenditure, the little bag that held his sovereigns would be an infallible guide, as he never bought any thing that he did not immediately pay for.”

63. I believe that nobody will deny, that, generally speaking, you pay for the same article a fourth part more in the case of trust than you do in the case of ready money. Suppose, then, the baker, butcher, tailor, and shoemaker, receive from you only one hundred pounds a year. Put that together ; that is to say, multiply twenty-five by twenty, and you will find, that, at the end of twenty years, you have 500*l.* besides the accumulating and growing interest. The fathers of the Church (I mean the ancient ones), and also the canons of the Church, forbade selling on trust at a higher price than for ready money, which

was in effect, to forbid *trust*; and this, doubtless, was one of the great objects which those wise and pious men had in view; for they were fathers in legislation and morals as well as in religion. But the doctrine of these fathers and canons no longer prevails; they are set at nought by the present age, even in the countries that adhere to their religion. ADDISON's Goddess has prevailed over the fathers and the canons; and men not only make a difference in the price regulated by the difference in the mode of payment; but it would be absurd to expect them to do otherwise. They must not only charge something for the want of the *use* of the money; but they must charge something additional for the *risk* of its loss, which may frequently arise, and most frequently does arise, from the misfortunes of those to whom they have assigned their goods on trust. The man, therefore, who purchases on trust, not only pays for the trust, but he also pays his due share of what the tradesman loses by trust; and, after all, he is not so good a customer as the man who purchases cheaply with ready money; for there is his name indeed in the tradesman's book; but with that name the tradesman cannot go to market to get a fresh supply.

64. Infinite are the ways in which gentlemen lose by this sort of dealing. Servants go and order, sometimes, things not wanted at all; at other times, more than is wanted; at others, things of a higher quality; and all this would be obviated by purchasing with ready money; for, whether through the hands of the party himself, or through those of an inferior, there would always be an actual counting out of the money; somebody would *see* the thing bought and see the money paid; and as the master would give the house-keeper or steward a bag of money at the time, he would *see* the money too, would set a proper value upon it, and would just desire to know upon what it had been expended.

65. How is it that farmers are so exact, and show such a disposition to retrench in the article of la-

bour, when they seem to think little, or nothing, about the sums which they pay in tax upon malt, wine, sugar, tea, soap, candles, tobacco, and various other things? You find the utmost difficulty in making them understand, that they are affected by these. The reason is, that they *see* the money which they give to the labourer on each succeeding Saturday night; but they do not see that which they give in taxes on the articles before mentioned. Why is it that they make such an outcry about the six or seven millions a year which are paid in poor-rates, and say not a word about the sixty millions a year raised in other taxes? The consumer pays all; and, therefore, they are as much interested in the one as in the other; and yet the farmers think of no tax but the poor tax. The reason is, that the latter is collected from them in *money*: they *see* it go out of their hands into the hands of another; and, therefore, they are everlastingly anxious to reduce the poor-rates, and they take care to keep them within the smallest possible bounds.

66. Just thus would it be with every man that never purchased but with ready money: he would make the amount as low as possible in proportion to his means: this care and frugality would make an addition to his means, and, therefore in the end, at the end of his life, he would have had a great deal more to spend, and still be as rich, as if he had gone in trust; while he would have lived in tranquillity all the while; and would have avoided all the endless papers and writings and receipts and bills and disputes and law-suits inseparable from a system of credit. This is by no means a lesson of *stinginess*; by no means tends to inculcate a heaping up of money; for, the purchasing with ready money really gives you more money to purchase with; you can afford to have a greater quantity and variety of things; and I will engage, that, if horses or servants be your taste, the saving in this way gives you an additional horse or an additional servant, if you be in any profession or engaged in any considerable trade. In

towns, it tends to accelerate your pace along the streets ; for, the temptation of the windows is answered in a moment by clapping your hand upon your thigh ; and the question, " Do I really want that ?" is sure to occur to you immediately ; because the touch of the money is sure to put that thought in your mind.

67. Now, supposing you to have a plenty, to have a fortune beyond your wants, would not the money which you would save in this way, be very well applied in acts of real benevolence ? Can you walk many yards in the streets ; can you ride a mile in the country ; can you go to half a dozen cottages ; can you, in short, open your eyes, without seeing some human being ; some one born in the same country with yourself, and who, on that account alone, has some claim upon your good wishes and your charity ; can you open your eyes without seeing some person to whom even a small portion of your annual savings would convey gladness of heart ? Your own heart will suggest the answer ; and if there were no motive but this, what need I say more in the advice which I have here tendered to you ?

68. Another great evil arising from this desire to be thought rich, or rather from the desire not to be thought poor, is the destructive thing which has been honoured by the name of "*speculation* ;" but which ought to be called Gambling. It is a purchasing of something which you do not want, either in your family or in the way of ordinary trade : a something to be sold again with a great profit ; and on the sale of which there is a considerable hazard. When purchases of this sort are made with ready money, they are not so offensive to reason, and not attended with such risk ; but when they are made with money *borrowed* for the purpose, they are neither more nor less than gambling transactions ; and they have been, in this country, a source of ruin, misery, and suicide, admitting of no adequate description. I grant that this gambling has arisen

from the influence of the “*Goddess*” before mentioned ; I grant that it has arisen from the facility of obtaining the fictitious means of making the purchases ; and I grant that that facility has been created by the system, under the baneful influence of which we live. But it is not the less necessary that I beseech you not to practise such gambling ; that I beseech you, if you be engaged in it, to disentangle yourself from it as soon as you can. Your life, while you are thus engaged, is the life of a gamester ; a life of constant anxiety ; constant desire to over-reach ; constant apprehension ; general gloom, enlivened, now and then, by a gleam of hope or of success. Even that success is sure to lead to further adventures ; and, at last, a thousand to one, that your fate is that of the pitcher to the well.

69. The great temptation to this gambling is, as in the case in other gambling, the *success of the few*. As young men, who crowd to the army, in search of rank and renown, never look into the ditch that holds their slaughtered companions ; but have their eye constantly fixed on the general in chief ; and as each of them belongs to the *same profession*, and is sure to be conscious that he has equal merit, every one deems himself the suitable successor of him who is surrounded with *Aides-de-camp*, and who moves battalions and columns by his nod ; so with the rising generation of “*speculators* :” they see the great estates that have succeeded the pencil-box and the orange-basket ; they see those whom nature and good laws made to black shoes, sweep chimnies or the streets, rolling in carriages, or sitting in saloons surrounded by gaudy footmen with napkins twisted round their thumbs ; and they can see no earthly reason why they should not all do the same ; forgetting the thousands and thousands, who, in making the attempt, have reduced themselves to that beggary which, before their attempt, they would have regarded as a thing wholly impossible.

70. In all situations of life, avoid the *trammels of*

*the law.* Man's nature must be changed before law-suits will cease ; and, perhaps, it would be next to impossible to make them less frequent than they are in the present state of this country ; but though no man who has any property at all, can say that he will have nothing to do with law-suits, it is in the power of most men to avoid them, in a considerable degree. One good rule is, to have as little as possible to do with any man who is fond of law-suits ; and who, upon every slight occasion, talks of an appeal to the law. Such persons, from their frequent litigations, contract a habit of using the technical terms of the courts, in which they take a pride, and are, therefore, companions peculiarly disgusting to men of sense. To such men a law-suit is a luxury, instead of being as it is, to men of ordinary minds, a source of anxiety and a real and substantial scourge. Such men are always of a quarrelsome disposition, and avail themselves of every opportunity to indulge in that which is mischievous to their neighbours. In thousands of instances men go to law for the indulgence of mere anger. The Germans are said to bring *spite-actions* against one another ; and to harass their poorer neighbours, from motives of pure revenge. They have carried this their disposition with them to America ; for which reason no one likes to live in a German neighbourhood.

71. Before you go to law, consider well the *cost* ; for if you win your suit and are poorer than you were before, what do you accomplish ? You only imbibe a little additional anger against your opponent ; you injure him, but do harm to yourself. Better to put up with the loss of one pound than of two, to which latter is to be added all the loss of time ; all the trouble, and all the mortification and anxiety attending a law-suit. To set an attorney to work to worry and torment another man is a very base act ; to alarm his family as well as himself, while you are sitting quietly at home. If a man owe you money which he cannot pay, why add to

his distress without the chance of benefit to yourself? Thousands of men have injured themselves by resorting to the law; while very few ever bettered themselves by it, except such resort were unavoidable.

72. Nothing is much more discreditable than what is called *hard dealing*. They say of the Turks, that they know nothing of *two prices* for the same article: and that to ask an abatement of the lowest shopkeeper is to insult him. It would be well if Christians imitated Mahometans in this respect. To ask one price and take another, or to offer one price and give another, besides the loss of time that it occasions, is highly dishonourable to the parties, and especially when pushed to the extent of solemn protestations. It is in fact, a species of lying; and it answers no one advantageous purpose to either buyer or seller. I hope that every young man, who reads this, will start in life with a resolution never to higgle and lie in dealings. There is this circumstance in favour of the bookseller's business; every book has its fixed price, and no one ever asks an abatement. If it were thus in all other trades, how much time would be saved, and how much immorality prevented!

73. As to the spending of your time, your business or your profession is to claim the priority of every thing else. Unless that be *duly attended to*, there can be no real pleasure in any other employment of a portion of your time. Men, however, must have some leisure, some relaxation from business; and in the choice of this relaxation, much of your happiness will depend. Where fields and gardens are at hand, they present the most rational scenes for leisure. As to company, I have said enough in the former letter to deter any young man from that of drunkards and rioting companions; but there is such a thing as your quiet "*pipe-and-pot-companions*," which are, perhaps, the most fatal of all. Nothing can be conceived more dull, more stupid, more the contrary of edification and rational

amusement, than sitting, sotting, over a pot and a glass, sending out smoke from the head, and articulating, at intervals, nonsense about all sorts of things. Seven years' service as a galley-slave would be more bearable to a man of sense, than seven months' confinement to society like this. Yet, such is the effect of habit, that, if a young man become a frequenter of such scenes, the idle propensity sticks to him for life. Some companions, however, every man must have; but these every well-behaved man will find in private houses, where families are found residing, and where the suitable intercourse takes place between women and men. A man that cannot pass an evening without drink merits the name of a sot. Why should there be drink for the purpose of carrying on conversation? Women stand in need of no drink to stimulate them to converse; and I have a thousand times admired their patience in sitting quietly at their work, while their husbands are engaged, in the same room, with bottles and glasses before them, thinking nothing of the expense and still less of the shame which the distinction reflects upon them. We have to thank the women for many things, and particularly for their sobriety, for fear of following their example in which men drive them from the table, as if they said to them: "You have "had enough; food is sufficient for you; but we "must remain to fill ourselves with drink, and to talk "in language which your ears ought not to endure." When women are getting up to retire from the table, men rise *in honour* of them; but, they take special care not to follow their excellent example. That which is not fit to be uttered before women is not fit to be uttered at all; and it is next to a proclamation tolerating drunkenness and indecency, to send women from the table the moment they have swallowed their food. The practice has been ascribed to a desire to leave them to themselves: but why should they be left to themselves? Their conversation is always the most lively, while their persons are generally the most agreeable objects. No: the plain

truth is, that it is the love of the drink and of the indecent talk that send women from the table; and it is a practice which I have always abhorred. I like to see young men, especially, follow them out of the room, and prefer their company to that of the sots who are left behind.

74. Another mode of spending the leisure time is that of books. Rational and well-informed companions may be still more instructive; but, books never annoy; they cost little; and they are always at hand, and ready at your call. The sort of books, must, in some degree, depend upon your pursuit in life; but there are some books necessary to every one who aims at the character of a well-informed man. I have slightly mentioned HISTORY and Geography in the preceding letter; but I must here observe, that, as to both these, you should begin with your own country, and make yourself well acquainted, not only with its ancient state, but with the *origin* of all its principal institutions. To read of the battles which it has fought, and of the intrigues by which one king or one minister has succeeded another, is very little more profitable than the reading of a romance. To understand well the history of the country, you should first understand how it came to be divided into counties, hundreds, and into parishes; how judges, sheriffs, and juries first arose; to what end they were all invented, and how the changes with respect to any of them have been produced. But, it is of particular consequence, that you ascertain the *state of the people* in former times, which is to be ascertained by *comparing the then price of labour with the then price of food*. You hear enough, and you read enough, about the *glorious wars* in the reign of KING EDWARD the THIRD; and it is very proper that those glories should be recorded and remembered; but you never read, in the works of the historians, that, in that reign, a common labourer earned three-pence-halfpenny a day; and that a *fat sheep* was sold, at the same time, for one shilling and twopence, and a *fat hog*, two years old, for three shillings and four-

pence, and a fat goose for twopence-halfpenny. You never read, that women received a penny a day for hay-making or weeding in the corn, and that a gallon of red wine was sold for fourpence. These are matters which historians have deemed to be beneath their notice; but, they are matters of real importance: they are matters which ought to have practical effect at this time; for these furnish the criterion whereby we are to judge of our condition compared with that of our forefathers. The poor-rates form a great feature in the laws and customs of this country. Put to a thousand persons who have read what is called the history of England; put to them the question, how the poor-rates came? and nine hundred and ninety-nine of the thousand will tell you, that they know nothing at all of the matter. This is not history; a list of battles and a string of intrigues are not history, they communicate no knowledge applicable to our present state; and it really is better to amuse oneself with an avowed romance, which latter is a great deal worse than passing one's time in counting the trees.

75. History has been described as affording arguments of experience; as a record of what has been, in order to guide us as to what is likely to be, or what ought to be; but, from this romancing history, no such experience is to be derived: for it furnishes no facts on which to found arguments relative to the existing or future state of things. To come at the true history of a country you must read its laws: you must read books treating of its usages and customs, in former times; and you must particularly inform yourself as to *prices of labour and of food*. By reading the single Act of the 23rd year of EDWARD the THIRD, specifying the price of labour at that time; by reading an act of Parliament passed in the 24th year of HENRY the 8th; by reading these two Acts, and then reading the PRECOSUM of BISHOP FLEETWOOD, which shows the price of food in the former reign, you come into full possession of the knowledge of what England was in former times. Divers

books teach how the divisions of the country arose, and how its great institutions were established ; and, the result of this reading is in store of knowledge, which will afford you pleasure for the whole of your life.

76. History, however, is by no means the only thing about which every man's leisure furnishes him with the means of reading ; besides which, every man has not the same taste. Poetry, Geography, Moral Essays, the divers subjects of Philosophy, Travels, Natural History, books on Sciences ; and, in short, the whole range of book-knowledge is before you : but, there is one thing always to be guarded against ; and that is, not to admire and applaud any thing you read, merely because it is the  *fashion* to admire and applaud it. Read, consider well what you read, form *your own judgment*, and stand by that judgment in despite of the sayings of what are called learned men, until fact or argument be offered to convince you of your error. One writer praises another ; and it is very possible for writers so to combine as to cry down, and, in some sort, to destroy the reputation of any one who meddles with the combination, unless the person thus assailed be blessed with uncommon talent and uncommon perseverance. When I read the works of POPE and of SWIFT, I was greatly delighted with their lashing of DENNIS ; but wondered, at the same time, why they should have taken so much pains in running down such a  *fool*. By the merest accident in the world, being at a tavern in the woods of America, I took up an old book, in order to pass away the time while my travelling companions were drinking in the next room ; but, seeing the book contained the criticisms of DENNIS, I was about to lay it down, when the play of "CATO" caught my eye ; and, having been accustomed to read books in which this play was lauded to the skies, and knowing it to have been written by ADDISON, every line of whose works I had been taught to believe teemed with wisdom and genius, I condescended to begin to read, though the

work was from the pen of that *fool* DENNIS. I read on, and soon began to *laugh*, not at Dennis but at Addison. I laughed so much and so loud, that the landlord, who was in the passage, came in to see what I was laughing at. In short, I found it a most masterly production, one of the most witty things that I had ever read in my life. I was delighted with DENNIS, and was heartily ashamed of my former admiration of CATO, and felt no little resentment against POPE and SWIFT for their endless reviling of this most able and witty critic. This, as far as I recollect, was the first *emancipation* that had assisted me in my reading. I have, since that time, never taken any thing upon trust: I have judged for myself, trusting neither to the opinions of writers nor in the fashions of the day. Having been told by DR. BLAIR, in his lectures on Rhetoric, that, if I meant to write correctly, I must "give my days and nights to ADDISON," I read a few numbers of the Spectator at the time I was writing my English Grammar: I gave neither my nights nor my days to him; but I found an abundance of matter to afford examples of *false grammar*; and, upon a re-perusal, I found that the criticisms of DENNIS might have been extended to this book too.

77. But that which never ought to have been forgotten by those who were men at the time, and that which ought to be *made known to every young man of the present day*, in order that he may be induced to exercise his own judgment with regard to books, is, the transactions relative to the writings of SHAKSPEARE, which transactions took place about thirty years ago. It is still, and it was then much more, the practice to extol every line of SHAKSPEARE to the skies: not to admire SHAKSPEARE has been deemed to be a proof of want of understanding and taste. MR. GARRICK, and some others after him, had their own good and profitable reasons for crying up the works of this poet. When I was a very little boy, there was a *jubilee* in honour of SHAKSPEARE, and as he was said to have planted a *Mulberry-tree*, boxes,

and other little ornamental things in wood, were sold all over the country, as having been made out of the trunk or limbs of this ancient and sacred tree. We Protestants laugh at the *relics* so highly prized by Catholics ; but never was a Catholic people half so much duped by the relics of saints, as this nation was by the mulberry tree, of which, probably, more wood was sold than would have been sufficient in quantity to build a ship of war, or a large house. This madness abated for some years ; but, towards the end of the last century it broke out again with more fury than ever. SHAKSPEARE'S works were published by BOYDELL, an Alderman of London, at a subscription of *five hundreds pounds for each copy*, accompanied by plates, each forming a large picture. Amongst the mad men of the day was a Mr. IRELAND, who seemed to be more mad than any of the rest. His adoration of the poet led him to perform a pilgrimage to an old farm-house, near Stratford-upon-Avon, said to have been the birth-place of the poet. Arrived at the spot, he requested the farmer and his wife to let him search the house for papers, *first going upon his knees*, and praying, in the poetic style, the gods to aid him in his quest. He found no papers ; but he found that the farmer's wife, in clearing out a garret some years before, had found some rubbishy old papers which she had *burnt*, and which had probably been papers used in the wrapping up of pigs' cheeks to keep them from the bats. "O, wretched woman!" exclaimed he ; "do you know what you have done?" "O dear, no!" said the woman, half frightened out of her wits : "no harm, I hope ; for the papers were *very old* ; I dare say as old as the house itself." This threw him into an additional degree of *excitement*, as it is now fashionably called : he raved, he stamped, he foamed, and at last quitted the house, covering the poor woman with every term of reproach ; and hastening back to Stratford, took post-chaise for London, to relate to his brother madmen the horrible sacrilege of this heathenish woman. Unfortunately for MR. IRELAND,

unfortunately for his learned brothers in the metropolis, and unfortunately for the reputation of SHAKSPEARE, Mr. IRELAND took with him to the scene of his adoration *a son, about sixteen years of age*, who was articled to an attorney in London. The son was by no means so sharply bitten as the father; and, upon returning to town, he conceived the idea of *supplying the place of the invaluable papers* which the farm-house heathen had destroyed. He thought, and he thought rightly, that he should have little difficulty in writing plays *just like those of Shakespeare!* To get *paper* that should seem to have been made in the reign of QUEEN ELIZABETH, and *ink* that should give to writing the appearance of having the same age, was somewhat difficult; but both were overcome. Young IRELAND was acquainted with a son of a bookseller, who dealt in *old books*: the blank leaves of these books supplied the young author with paper: and he found out the way of making proper ink for his purpose. To work he went, *wrote several plays*, some *love-letters*, and other things; and having got a Bible, extant in the time of SHAKSPEARE, he wrote *notes* in the margin. All these, together with *sonnets* in abundance, and other little detached pieces, he produced to his father, telling him he got them from a gentleman, who had *made him swear that he would not divulge his name*. The father announced the invaluable discovery to the literary world: the literary world rushed to him; the manuscripts were regarded as genuine by the most grave and learned Doctors, some of whom (and amongst these were DOCTORS PARR and WARTON) gave, *under their hands*, an opinion, that the manuscripts *must have been written by Shakspeare*; for that *no other man in the world could have been capable of writing them!*

78. MR. IRELAND opened a subscription, published these new and invaluable manuscripts at an enormous price; and preparations were instantly made for *performing one of the plays*, called VORTIGERN. Soon after the acting of the play, the indiscretion of

the lad caused the secret to explode ; and, instantly, those who had declared that he had written as well as SHAKSPEARE, did every thing in their power to *destroy him !* The attorney drove him from his office ; the father drove him from his house ; and, in short, he was hunted down as if he had been a malefactor of the worst description. The truth of this relation is undeniable ; it is recorded in numberless books. The young man is, I believe, yet alive ; and, in short, no man will question any one of the facts.

79. After this, where is the person of sense who will be guided in these matters by *fashion* ? where is the man, who wishes not to be deluded, who will not, when he has read a book, *judge for himself* ? After all these jubilees and pilgrimages ; after BOY-DELL's subscription of 500*l.* for one single copy ; after it had been deemed almost impiety to doubt of the genius of SHAKSPEARE surpassing that of all the rest of mankind ; after he had been called the "*Immortal Bard*," as a matter of course, as we speak of MOSES and AARON, there having been but one of each in the world ; after all this, comes a lad of sixteen years of age, writes that which learned Doctors declare could have been written by no man but SHAKSPEARE, and, when it is discovered that this laughing boy is the real author, the Doctors turn round upon him, with all the newspapers, magazines, and reviews, and, of course, the public at their back, revile him as an *impostor* ; and, under that odious name, hunt him out of society, and doom him to starve ! This lesson, at any rate, he has given us : not to rely on the judgment of Doctors and other pretenders to literary superiority. Every young man, when he takes up a book for the first time, ought to remember this story ; and if he do remember it, he will disregard fashion with regard to the book, and will pay little attention to the decision of those who call themselves critics.

80. I hope that your taste would keep you aloof from the writings of those detestable villains, who employ the powers of their mind in debauching the

minds of others, or in endeavours to do it. They present their poison in such captivating forms, that it requires great virtue and resolution to withstand their temptations ; and, they have, perhaps, done a thousand times as much mischief in the world as all the infidels and atheists put together. These men ought to be called *literary pimps* : they ought to be held in universal abhorrence, and never spoken of with but execration. Any appeal to bad passions is to be despised ; any appeal to ignorance and prejudice ; but here is an appeal to the frailties of human nature, and an endeavour to make the mind corrupt, just as it is beginning to possess its powers. I have never known any but bad men, worthless men, men unworthy of any portion of respect, who took delight in, or even kept in their possession, writings of the description to which I here allude. The writings of SWIFT have this blemish ; and, though he is not a teacher of *lewdness*, but rather the contrary, there are certain parts of his poems which are much too filthy for any decent person to read. It was beneath him to stoop to such means of setting forth that wit which would have been far more brilliant without them. I have heard, that, in the library of what is called an "*illustrious person*," sold some time ago, there was an immense collection of books of this infamous description ; and from this circumstance, if from no other, I should have formed my judgment of the character of that person.

81. Besides reading, a young man ought to write, if he have the capacity and the leisure. If you wish to remember a thing well, put it into writing, even if you burn the paper immediately after you have done ; for the eye greatly assists the mind. Memory consists of a concatenation of ideas, the place, the time, and other circumstances, lead to the recollection of facts ; and no circumstance more effectually than stating the facts upon paper. A JOURNAL should be kept by every young man. Put down something against every day in the year, if it be merely a description of the weather. You will not

have done this for one year without finding the benefit of it. It disburthens the mind of many things to be recollected ; it is amusing and useful, and ought by no means to be neglected. How often does it happen that we cannot make a statement of facts, sometimes very interesting to ourselves and our friends, for the want of a record of the places where we were, and of things that occurred on such and such a day ! How often does it happen that we get into disagreeable disputes about things that have passed, and about the time and other circumstances attending them ! As a thing of mere curiosity, it is of some value, and may frequently prove of very great utility. It demands not more than a minute in the twenty-four hours ; and that minute is most agreeably and advantageously employed. It tends greatly to produce regularity in the conducting of affairs : it is a thing demanding a small portion of attention *once in everyday* : I myself have found it to be attended with great and numerous benefits, and I therefore strongly recommend it to the practice of every reader.

---

### LETTER III.

TO A LOVER.

---

82. THERE are two descriptions of Lovers on whom all advice would be wasted ; namely, those in whose minds passion so wholly overpowers reason as to deprive the party of his sober senses. Few people are entitled to more compassion than young men thus affected : it is a species of insanity that assails them ; and, when it produces self-destruction, which it does in England more frequently than in all the other countries in the world put together, the mortal remains of the sufferer ought to be dealt with

in as tender a manner as that of which the most merciful construction of the law will allow. If SIR SAMUEL ROMILLY's remains were, as they were, in fact, treated as those of a person labouring under "*temporary mental derangement*," surely the youth who destroys his life on account of unrequited love, ought to be considered in as mild a light! SIR SAMUEL was represented, in the evidence taken before the Coroner's Jury, to have been *inconsolable for the loss of his wife*; that this loss had so dreadful an effect upon his mind, that it *bereft him of his reason*, made life insupportable, and led him to commit the act of *suicide*: and, on *this ground alone*, his *remains* and his *estate* were rescued from the awful, though just and wise, sentence of the law. But, unfortunately for the reputation of the administration of that just and wise law, there had been, only about two years before, a *poor man*, at Manchester, *buried in cross-roads*, and under circumstances which entitled his *remains* to mercy much more clearly than in the case of SIR SAMUEL ROMILLY.

83. This unfortunate youth, whose name was Smith, and who was a shoemaker, was in love with a young woman, who, in spite of all his importunities and his proofs of ardent passion, refused to marry him, and even discovered her liking for another; and he, unable to support life, accompanied by the thought of her being in possession of any body but himself, put an end to his life by the means of a rope. If, in any case, we are to *presume* the existence of insanity; if, in any case, we are led to believe the thing *without positive proof*; if, in any case, there can be an apology in human nature itself, for such an act; *this was that case*. We all know (as I observed at the time;) that is to say, all of us who cannot wait to calculate upon the gains and losses of the affair; all of us, except those who are endowed with this provident frigidity, know well what youthful love is; and what its torments are, when accompanied by even the smallest portion of jealousy. Every man, and especially every English-

man (for here we seldom love or hate by halves,) will recollect how many mad pranks he has played; how many wild and ridiculous things he has said and done between the age of sixteen and that of twenty-two; how many times a kind glance has scattered all his reasoning and resolutions to the winds; how many times a cool look has plunged him into the deepest misery! Poor SMITH who was at this age of love and madness, might, surely, be presumed to have done the deed in a moment of "*temporary mental derangement.*" He was an object of compassion in every humane breast: he had parents and brethren and kindred and friends to lament his death, and to feel shame at the disgrace inflicted on his lifeless body: yet, HE was pronounced to be a *felo de se*, or *self murderer*, and his body was put into a hole by the way-side, with a stake driven down through it; while that of ROMILLY had mercy extended to it, on the ground that the act had been occasioned by "*temporary mental derangement,*" caused by his grief for the death of his wife!

84. To *reason* with passion like that of the unfortunate SMITH, is perfectly useless; you may, with as much chance of success, reason and remonstrate with the winds or the waves: if you make impression, it lasts but for a moment: your effort, like an inadequate stoppage of waters, only adds, in the end, to the violence of the torrent: the current must have and will have its course, be the consequences what they may. In cases not quite so decided, *absence*, the sight of *new faces*, the sound of *new voices*, generally serve, if not as a radical cure, as a mitigation, at least, of the disease. But, the worst of it is, that, on this point, we have the girls (and women too) against us! For they look upon it as right that every lover should be a *little maddish*; and, every attempt to rescue him from the thraldom imposed by their charms, they look upon as an overt act of treason against their natural sovereignty. No girl ever liked a young man less for his having done things foolish and wild and ridiculous, provided she

was *sure* that love of her had been the cause: let her but be satisfied upon this score, and there are very few things which she will not forgive. And, though wholly unconscious of the fact, she is a great and sound philosopher after all. For, from the nature of things, the rearing of a family always has been, is, and must ever be, attended with cares and troubles, which must infallibly produce, at times, feelings to be combated and overcome by nothing short of that ardent affection which first brought the parties together. So that, talk as long as Parson MALTHUS likes about "moral restraint;" and report as long as the Committees of Parliament please about preventing "*premature and improvident marriages*" amongst the labouring classes, the passion that they would *restrain*, while it is necessary to the existence of mankind, is the greatest of all the compensations for the inevitable cares, troubles, hardships, and sorrows of life; and, as to the *marriages*, if they could once be rendered universally *provident*, every generous sentiment would quickly be banished from the world.

85. The other description of lovers, with whom it is useless to reason, are those who love according to the *rules of arithmetic*, or who measure their matrimonial expectations by the *chain of the land-surveyor*. These are not love and marriage; they are bargain and sale. Young men will naturally, and almost necessarily, fix their choice on young women in their own rank in life; because from habit and intercourse they will know them best. But, if the length of the girl's purse, present or contingent, be a consideration with the man, or the length of his purse, present or contingent, be a consideration with her, it is an affair of bargain and sale. I know that kings, princes, and princesses are, in respect of marriage, restrained by the law; I know that nobles, if not thus restrained by positive law, are restrained, in fact, by the very nature of their order. And here is a disadvantage which, as far as real enjoyment of life is concerned, more than counterbalances all the

advantages that they possess over the rest of the community. This disadvantage, generally speaking, pursues rank and riches downwards, till you approach very nearly to that numerous class who live by manual labour, becoming, however, less and less as you descend. You generally find even very vulgar rich men making a sacrifice of their natural and rational taste to their mean and ridiculous pride, and thereby providing for themselves an ample supply of misery for life. By preferring "*provident* marriages" to marriages of love, they think to secure themselves against all the evils of poverty; but *if poverty come*, and come it may, and frequently does, in spite of the best laid plans, and best modes of conduct; *if poverty come*, then where is the counter-balance for that ardent mutual affection, which troubles, and losses, and crosses always increase rather than diminish, and which, amidst all the calamities that can befall a man, whispers to his heart, that his best possession is still left him unimpaired? The WORCESTERSHIRE BARONET, who has had to endure the sneers of fools on account of his marriage with a beautiful and virtuous servant maid, would, were the present ruinous measures of the Government to drive him from his mansion to a cottage, still have a source of happiness; while many of those, who might fall in company with him, would, in addition to all their other troubles, have, perhaps, to endure the reproaches of wives to whom poverty, or even humble life, would be insupportable.

86. If marrying for the sake of money be, under any circumstances, despicable, if not disgraceful; if it be, generally speaking, a species of legal prostitution, only a little less shameful than that which, under some governments, is openly licensed for the sake of a tax; if this be the case generally, what ought to be said of a young man, who, in the hey-day of youth, should couple himself on to a libidinous woman, old enough, perhaps, to be his grandmother, ugly as the night-mare, offensive alike to the sight and the smell, and who should pretend to





































































































































































































































































































































































































